

UC-NRLF



\$D 47 454

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.
GIFT OF

Miss M. W. Shinn

Received *March*, 1895.

Accession No. *59482* Class No. *956*
T298





CORONATION

A STORY OF FOREST AND SEA

By E. P. TENNEY



BOSTON

NOYES, SNOW AND COMPANY

BROMFIELD STREET

1877

59482

COPYRIGHT, 1877, E. P. TENNEY.



INTRODUCTORY.

WHEN I was a boy I read a book of missionary adventures in the South Seas. Night after night I dreamed of

“The coral groves, the shores of conch and pearl.”

Midnight visions revealed to me the bottom of the sea,—caves paved with beautiful stones, bright colored shells and growing coral, with walls and roof marked by delicate tints of green and blue. I often imagined myself among palm groves, fanned by breezes from the sea.

Three nights in succession, I dreamed of being on ship-board with a missionary bound to some island parish. I can never forget his face as last I saw it, and his wild cry the last time I heard his voice. In calm weather the ship sighted land in the night, and drifted ashore; there was no wind, but the swell setting towards the land, was irresistible. The ship, at about midnight, drove into a cave three or four hundred feet deep, breaking away parts of the vessel against each corner of the cave's mouth; and then the top-

masts knocked the roof, and tore down fragments of overhanging rock. No landing was possible inside the cave; black walls rose precipitous from the water. A lead dropped astern showed twenty fathoms. The surf at the cave's mouth was phosphorescent, and the breaking water all around inside the cave was shining out of the darkness, as if the margin of the sea was on fire.

Within this circle of ill-omened fire, and under overshadowing darkness the rocking ship was slowly filling and sinking. Some of the passengers and crew were killed by the fall of rocks and timbers. Others tried, after day break, to escape in the boats, but were overwhelmed by the waves, which broke heavily near land. One boat load escaped.

In my dream I was in the number of the saved; and the missionary's son, a lad of six, sat beside me; but his father, in trying to reach the boat, suddenly sank in deep water, as if drawn down by some unknown force. He raised his hands, and—looking straight at me—cried, "Save my son!" The agonizing cry awoke me.

I am to-day living in a dream. I have seen this missionary's son—Peter—come to my house. It was when I lived in the parsonage, down the lane. Just such a lad as I saw in the boat at the cave's mouth! And he is the son of a missionary.

This book is written for the lad Peter, to tell him the story of the man to whom he owes his life. If I can persuade him,—in his adopted home among the crags of the Cape within easy reach of unrivaled forest walks in the

neighborhood of the sea,—to live much in solitudes, to cherish the very highest aims in life, to be self-sacrificing, and to be diligent in doing solid work for God and man, to walk with God as his nearest Friend, and to rely on Him most of all—I shall care little whether any one else reads the book or not.

This story is—in respect to its most vital points—a true account of this lad's kinsman, and my most intimate friend. As the years go by, I shall less heed the death of him who was my comrade in early life, if I find this child Peter growing up with those characteristics which will make his life noble. And when I myself go down to sleep in the silent valley, I shall not think that I have lived wholly in vain, if this story of Cephas leads one human soul to a higher appreciation of the comfort, spiritual quickening and power to be gained by hours of sweet communion and holy striving with the Lord, in those closets which God himself has made in the solitudes of the earth.

Manchester, Massachusetts, August, 1876.



CONTENTS.

I.	TWO BOYS IN ONE CRADLE	I
II.	THE PHANTOM OF TRAGABIGZANDA . .	9
III.	THE NORTH STAR	25
IV.	CROOKED STICKS	46
V.	THE PHANTOM HOUSE	60
VI.	RISING FROM THE DEAD	83
VII.	THE FISHING VILLAGE	102
VIII.	AN OLD RED TRUNK	111
IX.	WHERE TO KEEP IT	121
X.	STONE COVE	130
XI.	THE SHAGBARK	138
XII.	COLD SPRING MEADOW	148
XIII.	JACK'S HILL	157
XIV.	THE ENGLISH HELEN	163

XV.	THE ESSEX WOODS	169
XVI.	A WALK TO NORMAN'S WOE . .	179
XVII.	SANDY POINT	191
XVIII.	OLD HARBOR	206
XIX.	AMONG THE ISLANDS	220
XX.	A WALK IN THE RAIN	234
XXI.	MORE RAIN	249
XXII.	MOUNT ANNE	261
XXIII.	MOQUELUMNE HILL.	271
XXIV.	THE LIVE OAKS	284
XXV.	ERECTING THE AIR CASTLES . .	291
XXVI.	THE EARTHQUAKE'S SHOCK . . .	298
XXVII.	THE WORK LAID DOWN	312
XXVIII.	BLACK HAWK TO BOULDER . . .	327
XXIX.	HOUSE ISLAND	336
XXX.	THE OLD NECK	346
XXXI.	ALONE IN THE FOREST	352
XXXII.	THE PROPHET'S MOUNTAIN . . .	355
XXXIII.	CORONATION	364
XXXIV.	THE BOY PETER	385



CORONATION.



I.

TWO BOYS IN ONE CRADLE.

CEPHAS' mother and my mother traded cradles in our infancy, so that we were both rolled on the same rockers. The old shell was sold at auction to the almshouse keeper when the homestead was broken up ; of which we were glad, thinking that we should stand a good chance to occupy that same settee-cradle again in our second childhood. This infantile truck was sold to my mother when the mother of Cephas emigrated, taking her son to Nuntundale, where they staid till the boy was thirteen years old ; he and I never knowing all that time how near we were to being brothers, so far as our early crib could make us so. Meantime he had another brother born, who ran away from home a little while before Cephas returned to his native village. After this, for a few years, Cephas

lived near neighbor to me till he went away to school to make ready for his life work.

In these years of later childhood and early youth we stuck fast to each other, by day and by night, like brothers. Perhaps he came to my mother's house in the evening, and crept stealthily in at a back window, as boys love secrecy, and then found his way to the attic, where I had a bed of boards on a frame ; and we kept awake to invent car-axles, and to tell no end of stories. Or, if he left my bed and board, I sought him in the early morning, as soon as night gave place to day. There dangled from his window a long string, whose inner end was tied to the great toe of his right foot ; and when I pulled he woke, and we walked. All one summer we tramped in the early morning.

A wild ravine just back of his father's house, led down upon Pennacook brook, the Poor Farm interval, and the world of the Merrimac. That river bottom with its wide expansé of green was our world of foreign travel ; and we wandered at will, as glad and full of comfort as if it had been the Danube, Nile, Jordan, or Ganges. As we first struck the borders of the brook, there was just before us, on the right, a bluff crowded with towering masts of pine. On the left, a narrow side ravine opened with various forks, some far reaching, and all walled in by steep and high banks clad with birch, hemlock and pine. Tall willows, dome-like butternuts, and high-reaching elms rose from the bottom of these valleys upon the margin of rivulets, which, like tiny fingers of the great river, were reaching thus far inland. Here we

made mud dams, built mills and railways, or climbed the slopes, and gathered the leaves and red berries of the mountain tea. The arms of an aged oak, upon the brow of a hill, became to us a favorite resort ; or, we sat with the squirrels upon the enormous arms of the great oilnut tree, our feet dangling over the cold spring from which we slaked our thirst. Again, we took the interval path, and, in the hollow,—back of the clay bank “Observatory,” which rises high above the river,—we found the old settlers’ road all overgrown. By this route we went into sweet meadows, trampling on the unmown grass and gladly bathing our feet in the dew, till we found the quicksand floor and precipitous side of the “Gulf,” whose yawning mouth had swallowed up many fair acres of farm.

In autumn, our morning walks extended to the “Sand-banks,” where a horseshoe curve revealed a vast expanse of river bottom, studded with old elms ; and the distant horizon was glowing, upon all its heights, with gorgeous banners of ripe leaves. After heavy frosts, we ascended “Rattlesnake,” climbed the big trunks and arms of the chestnut and the ragged bodies and smooth limbs of walnuts. Or, perhaps, we walked about the shores of our Gennessaret ; a sweet wild lake among the hills, whose wooded or shorn slopes — green with fir or grass, or yellow with corn, or red with maple — were fairer to us than any child’s dream of Gallilee.

And we consecrated all these places by prayer, believing that He who loved us in New Testament story still loved us and walked with us ; and we loved Him

more than we did each other. And though, in child-like planning, we thought it needful to invent a new language, the Maxdecroix, more barbarous and lawless than that of any savage tribe, yet we knew, I believe, a little of the language of a better and far country, and we thought to use that in any event. It is only yesterday that I revisited a blueberry pasture, where among the tall fruit-bearing shrubs,—I now know as then I did not,—Cephas plead hard with the Lord one day for my own upbuilding in a higher life ; and he rather wondered when we next met that I did not at once speak of a great change in spiritual experience. I am certain, whether or not his prayers were availing, that our talks together as children helped me much in my attempt to find the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

“Cephas,” said I one morning in October, as I had just saved my neck, tumbling out of a low walnut, “What do you most care for in this world ?”

“That I may be unselfish,” he answered, gathering up his bag full of nuts.

“If that be the case,” I replied, “it will be only fair for us to begin by going round to Mr. B.’s house to give him half our walnuts. When we steal, it ought to be at the halves.”

But his conscience, like mine and like the conscience of every true New England boy, was tough as a shag-bark on this subject. We had no scruples about carrying home our spoils, after first visiting Mr. B.’s cider mill and using two straws at one bunghole. As we took up the line of march homeward, my companion

turned to the smiling farmer B., who was holding out to us both hands full of red sweets fresh from the orchard, and said,—

“If your boys, Mr. B., will come and shake our swamp butternuts as thoroughly as we have your two walnuts by the river, they will be even with us.”

“They’ll do it, no doubt; I’ve trained them to it,” he said as he filled the top of our bag with apples. “This is the law in nutting time, to let everybody have enough to keep his grinders busy till green corn comes round.”

Then as we walked through the pines on our way home, we were again busy with the thoughts we talked on every day. For, every morning we had new words of Wisdom to exchange as mottoes for the day; with every morning light having new light from the Word, and new hints how we might open our hearts to Him, who was always knocking and seeking to abide with us. And every day we had stronger desires to be of use in diffusing light and love. It seemed, in these early days, that we might, sometime, go forward strongly in a life of devotion to God and self-sacrifice for men; but I am shamed now when I think how Cephas outstripped me. I had as good a chance as he to make the self-surrender perfect.

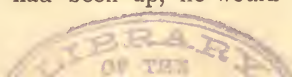
“Cephas,” said I, when the young pines, standing thick and impenetrable, were screening us from the house we had left, “we have come off with double spoil this morning.”

“Yes,” he answered, throwing away the core of the fourth pumpkin-sweet, “Mr. B. is thoroughly unselfish; and I like him.”

As we continued to demolish the pumpkins, it appeared that the mind of my companion was firmly fixed on plans for doing good, which he had begun to pursue, and which he chased like phantoms all his life. In pursuit of them, he was "mad" like Paul, and "beside himself" like the Son of Mary. As we talked together, in a little open space where sunshine and shade mingled at our feet on the carpet of yellow pine-needles, he drew out of his pocket a little scrap of paper, well worn, which he had copied in the quaint characters of the Maxdecroix, which only he and I could read ; and I read, what I have since found to be the words of a holy man of the thirteenth century :—" Let no one rebuke me if love forces me to go like a mad-man ! O Christ, in all things thou showest only love, never art thou conscious of thyself." And Cephas began in that very moment to hint of what seemed to me the wildest dreams, and schemes impracticable, revolutions which appeared to him as fundamental as the new ideas of Bacon at sixteen. It was the first time he had ever spoken so fully about his aims in life ; and I confess that they made a great impression upon me as being the very highest objects possible to man.

But I grew drowsy with hearing him, withal remembering our long jaunt and having a slight sense of the fulness which comes by plenty of apples and new cider ; and I went to sleep. When I awoke my companion was gone, and I still kept my head upon his nut bag for a long time, till he returned, looking certainly somewhat weird and strange to me ; and after that, walking homewards, scarcely a word was spoken.

I noticed that, as the months rolled on, there was, somehow, coming to be a great gulf between us. Our friendship was more intimate than ever, but a certain chasm was widening, and I could see that in the interior life he was getting far away from me. If he was not more and more alone, yet I noticed it more that he had hours of solitude whose secret was not given me ; and I loved him too much to question him about them. Sometimes he came to me seeming worn and exhausted, with eye a little wild and face haggard. At such times he was strangely still, though I could see that he loved to be near me, and to be quiet with me. When we met to walk, he appeared, at times, so full of life and unlimited energy of body and mind that I was amazed. Sometimes, I stood to look at him, when his eyes were off me, to see if I could discover the secret of his singular exaltation. In such moments he talked of the castles he was building ; although they were so ill defined in outline that I obtained little idea of what they really were, any more than I should have had the notion of a fair palace from seeing painted windows, and ornamental doors, and big foundation stones, and pieces of statuary, flying through the sky. His own boundless fertility in invention, and indomitable resolution in daring to attempt what was to me impossible, and tireless industry in the painful steps between him and his objects,—were some of the impressions I received from his talks, as we rambled over rough hills or smooth meadows. And if an excuse offered for our separating after such themes had been up, he would



easily slip away, though for my part I would have had company longer. Sometimes I called him the Wild Man ; but he always retorted by calling me the Tame Man ; so that I did not use the epithet often, although I often thought of it.

The next chapter relates one of the dreams which occupied the mind of boy and man.

II.

THE PHANTOM OF TRAGABIGZANDA.

PATCHED trousers and a blue cotton umbrella paced up and down a short sand beach in the rain. Occasionally there came forth a voice from under the canopy,—“A million might as well be two.” By and by the conclusion was reached that two millions might be four. Then before the dark walk was finished, “Two hundred millions,” sounded out from the cave of cotton. “Some old miser, like enough,” said I, as I watched him from under the railroad bridge near by. I was a stranger in Nuntundale; and thinking this a good opening for adventures in a unique country, I followed the old fellow to his home. He turned out to be Cephas, in full vigor of youth.

“Cephas,” said I, “you are a surprise to me.”

We sat up almost all night at the open fire,—which blazed or smouldered in his study from Thanksgiving to Fast,—doing as we used to do. Our laughter made his little old house ring to the rafters; while red apples roasted themselves upon the hearth, and oilnuts opened their shaggy shells for us.

When the night was far gone, I had found out much

of the man, whom I had not seen half a dozen times in as many years ; and toward morning I looked with wondering eyes on the stately fabric he was working on in his afternoon walk.

His schooldays had been so broken up and shortened by serious ill-health, that he had come into his work poorly fitted for it. It had been again and again a question whether he would ever get at any work at all ; but he had finally walked and slept his way into so much physical vigor as to enable him, after one or two attempts elsewhere, to begin the business of experimenting on the poor people of Tragabigzanda. He talked to them on Sundays, and went about among their homes on week-days, trying to do them good. According to his own account of himself, his mind was raw and undisciplined : he was unskilled in the use of language, his choice of words for extempore speech having small range ; and his literary judgment was so poor that great measure of chaff, considering the amount of wheat, appeared, when he would fain mix the bread of life for his people ; his ideas were so quaint that he was called queer, when he sought the rather to be a power among men ; he had by nature a style sufficiently perverse and outrageous, requiring all his leisure for years to mend it ; the use of his body in preaching was singular and sometimes comical, and his elocution was all at sea, the voice being as little under control as the salt waves ; moreover, he was almost morbidly bashful, and so varying in his feelings that it seemed, as he said, impossible for him to arrive at any correct self-knowledge ;

his judgment, also, in parochial affairs, greatly needed the schooling of experience. No wonder, thought Cephas, that his people gave him a poor living ; it was, as they both agreed, all that such services were worth.

But he was, also,—to present him more perfectly, as I must to defend him against his own self-accusations,—a man of great heart to love his people ; kind, and unfailing in good temper and genial humor ; of deep and wide sympathy, and consuming zeal, delighting always in self-sacrifice for others. Of untiring industry, he had some degree of originality as well as quaintness in his thinking, and some skill in the art of putting things. More than all else, he was a growing man, with amazing vitality, which could not be quenched, growing so incessantly that none could prophesy what he might be. And what else there was about him, in his life purposes, and in the spirit of the man, which drew me more and more to him, and which made him gain the mastery over me, will appear. It must be said, however, that one of the most noticeable traits in the character of my friend, at least at this period of his life, was humility, and a self-depreciation which was in some measure removed with the growing self-knowledge of later years. At this time, his self-knowledge seemed to be almost wholly limited to a discernment of the things in which he needed mending, and the ways in which he could best do the mending ; and his purpose to do this work was always uppermost in his mind. To me it appeared to be the most hopeful and mentally healthy sign about the man, that his worst faults were found out, not by my

subsequent inquiry among his people, but from his own lips, that night, between bites at baldwins and butter-nuts.

"But how came I in the ministry," he asked, "with so shabby a preparation, even in the partial course I took?"

"I feel satisfied," he continued, in answer to his own question, "that no lad preparing for the ministry ought to go to school, even half a dozen years, without more drill in writing and speaking English, which is the business he is to follow all his life."

He had been, it appeared, turning this topic in his mind till he had reached fixed notions. He believed that the only way to educate a young man to become a writer and a speaker, is to make the study of the English language—its vocabulary and its models of style—and the drill of writing and speaking far more prominent in the educational curriculum than it had been in his own schooldays. I found late in the night that I had stumbled upon a full-grown heretic on the subject of the education that is to be. He had become fully possessed with the notion that his pet scheme was the very one, which would, some day, bring a new era of power to the Christian church. While he claimed that this new educational machinery would work well for other pursuits in life, he especially insisted upon it, that if one generation of pastors could enter work after a twelve years' course such as he contemplated, the efficiency of the rank and file of the ministry would be doubled; and that if the scheme could gain firm foot-

ing, English literature and oratory would at once rise with a power never known before. This idea had been seized upon with all the energy of his nature, and he had been planning in detail a full course of education in various departments, to be endowed by the million. And, singularly enough, he had come to believe that he would personally see such an enterprise fairly set afloat; and more wonderful yet, the ragged fellow expected to be the founder of the funds by which to crowd the world with the solid buildings of what were now merely educational castles in the air.

We prayed over the business, covered the fire, rolled ourselves in blankets and lay down upon a buffalo skin in front of the chimney's mouth, and were soon asleep, dreaming about several million dollars put to the work of training generations of men, who will write and speak the English language with skill and effectiveness not yet seen except in the visions of that February night.

Month after month passed, till June came; but the weeks seemed years, for I was wearily, and a little impatiently, candidating in such prominent pulpits in Nuntundale as I could get into, hoping to hear a loud call; meantime, hearing scarce a word from the still small voice of the Holy One; and, what at the time I felt worse about,—hearing not an invitation to appear a second time, though my candidating sermon gave a strong hint that I desired it, bearing for its motto the legend that certain Gentiles “besought that these words

might be preached to them on the next Sabbath." I began to wish that I had been educated at one of Cephas' colleges, for it came to me a round dozen times that my voice was just horrid, and my hands and arms were mere elbows and thumbs, and that my style of composition was barbarous; though I was considered eminently sound in the faith and a man proper if not powerful. I had not seen much of Cephas, and as I was thinking more about a desirable parish than about making a desirable parson, I almost forgot to ask my friend just how he expected to found his new education.

One morning, however, as I took up my kids and tall hat and slender cane to go to see one more man in my place hunting, Cephas asked me to accompany him to the Cathedral Rock, one of the most notable objects in that part of wild and wonderful Nuntundale. Going out of his ample study, and hunting over all the rest of the house,—which comprised only one room, the kitchen and woodshed combined,—we found two stout sticks, two rough jackets, and two hard crusts. We then stood out upon the big flat stone at the front door, and lifted up our eyes to see the wide tracts of dark silent woods through which our morning tramp would take us.

Our path led under the great oak a little below the house, whose arms had wrestled with the winds of more than three hundred winters. Now it was lifting to the sky its myriad hands full of fresh leaves; calling upon all who passed that way to admire the beauty of its

foliage in early summer. We entered directly upon a by-road, flanked with fallen walls of stone and a wild bordering of shrubbery and small trees. Crossing a solitary plain of great width, we came upon low lands, where our feet were first embedded in mosses, and then we sprang from one quaking tussock to another, till we reached the foot of a sharp ascent gemmed with flowers. The slope was crowned by a precipitous wall half a hundred feet high, adorned with ferns and brakes growing in the crevices all over its face; green vines clambering far up from the bottom; and above, sprites of spruce came to the edge of the cliff. Going up by a watercourse to the right, we were now in a dense fir forest; through whose thickets and dark paths, we were to seek for the sight and sound of the sea, on the other side of the Cape. I began, at about this time,—fingering first my gold chain,—to tease my friend upon the way he had used the world in the use of old clothes; for he looked too shabby to find a place, if any well-to-do church should ever hear his fame and visit Tragabigzanda. I confess that I had been trying to stir up in him a spirit of rebellion against living in a small parish, with no prospect of money enough even to get out of the Pauline bachelor estate, to say nothing of having the comforts of life. We talked and walked some miles, till we entered a little opening in the trees made by a smooth ledge; upon one side of it, just where the rock was boldest, we saw a lone standard of white pine rising high above all other trees: this was the evergreen tower Cephas had pointed out to me, as

one of our waymarks, when we stood on his flat door-rock. Seeking a shady place, we stretched ourselves upon the rock bed, and looked upwards to the head of the mast, just now bending a little, as its full topsails caught the wind.

“You are not yourself,” said my friend, turning half over and placing his hand in mine. “Your boyhood faith and unselfish purpose have been somehow lost in these years of our separation. Did you learn false notions of unholy men in the schools?”

“The school of observation shows me that ministers need to be sharp,” I answered.

I acknowledge that the words he read did not sound to me as they did in my childhood:—“The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.” I felt a little like commenting upon it, in a spirit not full of perfect trust; for I remembered the pinching poverty of certain aged pastors, or their widows and little ones.

“When I sent you without purse and scrip and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing.” When Cephas read this text, I said,—“I believe your own experience will, some day, show that you ought to have earned in youth a support for old age. When the Lord promises to provide, *he* intends to provide by using your good sense in looking out for yourself. If you expect provender in later years, you must use sound judgment in making hay during the sunshine of youth and middle life.”

Cephas rose at once to his feet, and, stepping up to the big tree, put his back against it, saying,—“I feel as

though I had the North Pole at my back ; my backbone is stiffened by it. I am of firm conviction that I shall bless this world with money by the million, and it is my serious purpose to do it."

We had come by compass from the unnamed cliff to this royal pine ; and now we entered an obscure trail leading through low lands, and pushed on to find our noonday halt. I had not been in such a gloomy forest since the nights, when, as boys together, we sometimes wandered about by moonlight for miles over the "Dark Plains." The pine growth was so thick as to shut out the sun at noon, making it twilight at midday. The mystery and desolation of this wide-spreading reign of darkness and dampness finally gave place to a burnt belt, which we crossed, picking our way amid tree stems and shrubs, scorched and blackened. Sometimes we climbed upon an immense fallen trunk or mounted a big boulder, and looked over the dreary landscape to see where our lost path ought to lie ; and, at last, our vision was gladdened by the sight of two low bald hills in the distance, between which we must pass. Finding a flat rock, upon which two charred trunks had tumbled criss-cross, we made a fire and lunched. The sun was hot enough to broil us, but we were hungry and must eat ; and my friend said it was wicked to eat a lunch out of doors without a fire. So we gathered up scorched wood enough to lay a roof where the logs crossed each other, and under its black shade we spread ourselves and our table, having the fire to the leeward, just near enough for company ; and we threw

the crumbs of our crusts into the jaws of the hungry flames.

"My mother," said Cephas, "has an heirloom china platter which cost eight dollars ; and it has been in her family so long, that, if the money had been put at compound interest, it would now amount to more than sixty-five thousand dollars ; it is not very old either. And I am a firm believer in working miracles by compound interest."

"Ho ! Ho !" said I. "Here is your college !"

"Exactly," he answered, not in the least disconcerted by my tone.

And then he went on to tell me, how, when he was a boy, he had thought over this compound interest business one summer morning in bed, the idea dawning upon him with the day dawning ; and he then and there determined to found a Training School for ministers, with a twelve years' course, in which, for the whole period, nearly one-half the time and energy should be given to drill, having for its direct end the proper expression of thought in speech and writing ; leaving the remainder of the curriculum well rounded in its range of studies, and not necessarily at variance with that of many schools now established : this notion of developing to the utmost the ability to express thought was the vital one. And he had now fully elaborated a plan for a university on the same fundamental basis : he believing that men in all departments of life may be benefited by learning to express what ideas they have ; and that an educational system, which makes this idea

more prominent than anything else, will best meet the wants of the world,—affording as thorough discipline as any existing curriculum, and securing a far higher degree of power in using what men know or may come to know. And my friend was now confidently expecting that enough men of good sense would be found in the world to take care of some trifling sum of money that he might set apart for this purpose, which in two centuries would amount to a hundred million dollars, or as much more as might be thought desirable, if the time should be extended. He was so fully persuaded of the importance of the principle he advocated, that it seemed to him absolutely certain to become ultimately the leading educational theory; while he supposed the matter of one or two centuries, more or less, would be of little account, if only the idea should get good root upon this planet and bear fruit through the scores of thousands of years in which Christ's peace will prevail.

“Three hundred dollars,” said Cephas, soberly, “will in three hundred years amount to more than three hundred and fifty million dollars.”

And then it flashed upon me that I had heard that sentence before. I remembered that he had spoken of it when we were boys building saw-mills in the pasture. It was a boy-phantom, now a giant,—a phantom still.

“Educational reformers are as thick as mosquitos upon a summer's night,” said I to myself, banging away with a burnt club to kill one winged insect whose song at that moment annoyed my ear. “And here is

another bloodthirsty wretch whetting his sword for an attack on time-honored customs."

I made, however, no audible reply to Cephas' arithmetical statement, but silently pointed toward the still distant hills.

When we climbed the highest peak, the salt air greeted us; and we looked down upon a little beach and cove lying close under our feet. Hardly half a mile on the other side of the cove stood the Cathedral Rock. The bank of the ocean, at this point, is, for a considerable distance, a hundred and fifty feet high. This crag makes a corner in the coast line; presenting a square side toward the cove two hundred feet in length; and then, having made the corner, showing a square front of a hundred feet toward the open sea; beyond it, the bank falls away somewhat, being lower and less precipitous. The end of the Cathedral, which looks out upon the sea, has an arched doorway or entrance, twenty-five feet wide and eighty feet high, and within it a dark shadow, as if it were a cave's mouth. Upon the long side of the Cathedral next the cove is an arched grotto a hundred feet wide, lying low as if its base were deep in the sea. The top of the Cathedral is crowded with fir trees, rank and green; though, upon the very verge, there are some dead and white, with stems twisted and roots torn out by old storms or by the crumbling of turf and rock on the brink. We made quick time down the bank, seized a fisherman's boat—throwing out his lobster nets—and the tide being low, we were soon in the cavern, penetrating far. I was handling

the oars ; and my friend pulled out a roll of paper from his pocket, saying,—

“This is my last will and testament, which I have worked upon many months ; by which I am to found the school that is to be.”

I splashed a little cold water on him with one oar, and then jumped out of my clothes into the freezing brine. The founder of the college merely cooled his head and bathed his feet. Then we turned homeward ; hurrying over the black acres, and through the dark pines, till we reached the ledge, from which we could see the Tragabigzanda parsonage. We looked down upon infinite forest leaves, gently moving in the wind and glittering in the light of the descending sun. Meantime, I had interposed all manner of objections to Cephas' educational project, only to find him bearing me down with a lofty enthusiasm, and breaking through the obstacles I suggested, like an elephant brushing through cobwebs. His faith was firm and his manner emphatic. And I soon found that I might as well try to pour the Amazon through a pipe stem, as to compress him into what I supposed to be the channel of possibility and good sense. He had anticipated every objection and had an answer ready. He expected difficulties, and quoted the Bhagvat Geeta to me,—“Every undertaking is involved in its faults as the fire in its smoke.” My words were against him only like a storm bombarding the rocky coast. No mountain towering out of the sea seemed so grand to me, as this patched parson with his colossal ideas. I was walking

by the side of one who believed that he was to work a great revolution in the world.

We crossed the swamp just at nightfall, and came out upon the plain in time to look back and see the lower part of the forest deepening shadows, while one or two of the highest elevations were touched with the fires of the setting sun, and glowing like watchtowers of the wilderness. Before reaching home, we heard the whippoorwill, and we saw a little meadow sending up its mists after the day's heat. When we again stood upon the flat doorstep, looking back into the star-lit darkness toward the forest, I took my friend's hand, saying,—

“If your plan is so rational as you seem to think, it is probable that the common sense of mankind will find it out and adopt it, before two hundred years are gone.”

And he quietly replied,—“Things are looking that way; and it will come about, I trust, within two hundred years.”

After bread and milk, I went out to pace up and down in front of the cabin before turning in. And I thought to myself,—“It is certainly better to be poor and unknown, and to have a noble and unselfish aim in life, even if it is impracticable, than to live as I do, selfish and place hunting in the name of God, and contemptible in my own eyes.”

A long while before it was day, my companion slipped away in the darkness; but returned again some time after the sun was up, with a strange glow upon his

face, though, when his eyes were turned, I could see that some mighty agitation still left a watermark upon his features. Then I remembered how much he loved to be alone, when he was a little child.

As the years went by I learned that this idea of a New Education was nourished in lonely walks, so that the whole notion was a true child of the closet. This pastor held in contempt places and companions, save solitude and the Infinite God. But in such place and such Company, he plead for a ministry, which would prove better fitted to grapple with men. Stumps in clearings, and great rocks by the sea, beaches and brooks, round backed or ragged hills, and quiet walks, were the places where he cried to God for good sense in setting on foot this pet project. In the long daily walks, or tramps of days together, this phantom rose and claimed a place in his petitions: and the day dream was tempered by the Word; and it seemed the more likely to become real after he had plead with the Lord about it. With such an Alliance, he appeared to be impelled by a thousand forces for carrying forward his purpose.

I have at hand many bits of paper by which I am able to follow this man into his romantic closets, in which he climbed upward, as if

“By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.”

As chapels and churches are sometimes adorned with man's highest art, so this poor parson in his hours of devotion was surrounded by visions of beauty. And

these pictures pass before my eyes like a panorama of ancient ascetics in holy hermitage.

Here was, for example, a man who sometimes went away to a wooded island a little distance off the Tragabigzanda coast, that he might be alone with God. He would often row strongly over a heavy sea, and get into the thick shade of oak, walnut, cedar or pine ; and there spread out before the Lord his college papers, and wet the rocks with his tears in such agony of prayer that he could hardly speak. Then he would open his Bible under those leaves dripping with salt spray, and look at it, as if in the face of the sun, till his darkness gave place to heavenly light. And whether or not his prayers availed for others, they were answered in himself, and there was certainly one minister who received a new education. It was mental agitation of this sort which gave him constant freshness of feeling, and new plans for usefulness, and a new life upon a higher plane ; so that he was always ascending.

The most beautiful vision which my friend saw in all these days, was that Castle in the Air he was building. Whether he was threading the forests, looking out from the hills, floating on the waves, pacing the beach, tramping the deep snow or lying down in it, hidden in a storm, or traveling across the country against the northwest wind on a heavy crust,—he was looking for this fairy palace rising from its foundations and sharply figured against a summer or winter sky.

III.

THE NORTH STAR.

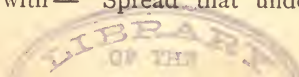
THE lonely house of the Tragabigzanda parson was my tying up place for some weeks. During this time I was so occupied here and there, that I did not fairly unearth another of the peculiar heresies of my friend till one evening, in this wise. The west wind had been bringing heat from the interior down to the coast all day, and I had hardly ventured out of the house. But when, toward night, I looked out upon the cool shadow of the old oak upon the green grass, I took *Æschylus* from the study table, and sought the shelter of those long arms, which were stretching out on every side of the great standard like the beams or rafters of a vast hall. Reading aloud, I had come upon the eighty-fifth line of *Prometheus*,—

* * “the strange portent of the talking oaks,”

when I heard a voice from the tree tops.—

“You will get cold from the dewfall, if you don’t look out.”

And then a moment after,—“Look out!” and down came a rubber blanket, with—“Spread that under



you." And then, in a moment more, I saw Cephas coming down a rope by hand from his lofty study in the top of the tree.

"You would go," said he, as he touched ground, "a thousand miles to see a man spin himself down a thousand feet of precipice, uncoiling the rope from his own bowels. Look then at a spider lowering himself from the limb of a tree to the earth."

Lying upon our backs we punched each other's ribs with every new joke, till one by one the stars over our heads were all in place. Then my companion turned to me soberly, asking,—

"Do you see the North Star?"

"Yes."

"Did I ever tell you what it means to me?"

"No."

"Let me tell you, then. You remember I took a short trip to California after leaving the seminary. I landed on a winter evening, and made at once for a Presbyterian church to whose pastor I had a letter of introduction. It was the night of his prayer-meeting, and to it I went. There was a big sand hill close by the meeting-house, reaching half way to the eaves; and I filled my shoes with sand climbing up its soft sides before going into the meeting. I kneeled upon its summit, thanking God for safe carriage over the seas, and there consecrated myself to God's service in California. As I looked up, I saw that the firmament, in this clear atmosphere, was nearer than ever before. And I took the near North Star as witness to my dedi-

cation to the work on that coast. But serious sickness soon compelled me to return home. I consoled myself, however, with the thought that I should speedily go back. It is still my leading purpose to go as soon as I can. Night after night, the North Star reminds me of my vow.

And then he told me how he first asserted his purpose to become a missionary at three years old, before he could speak the long word plainly. His mother, he said, led him, from his earliest memory, to believe that he was God's child, that he must have no will of his own, but always ask his Heavenly Father what to do, and then do it unflinchingly. He had once thought of being a foreign missionary; but concluded he was better fitted for the home work, in which he supposed it possible to deny himself as much, and to work as hard, as if he were to go among pagans.

Whether or not I failed to appreciate my friend's mission zeal I do not now remember. I recollect, however, that it was quite early when he proposed to hang up for the night. Seizing his knotted rope, he swung himself upon one of the big branches of the oak, and pulled a hammock from a high pocket in the trunk, and I was soon suspended in it from two contorted boughs. Cephas made a bed-chamber of his study, high up the the tree, sleeping securely in an old comforter upon the board floor. I could not help screwing my head around to see whether I was in range of the North Star, lest I should be made mad by it. I saw it eyeing me sharply.

"This North Star," said I to myself, "I always

thought a sober reality ; but ten to one it is only a phantom, belonging to this Tragabigzanda parson. The great bear is only a wild goose he is chasing over the earth and through the heavens."

I recalled to mind that when Cephas and I were boys together, he was full of wild missionary projects ; which was one reason why I called him the Wild Man.

I was waked by the twittering of birds at daybreak ; and when the sun shot his beams over the horizon, I turned out of bed. It was quite late when my friend came down from his roost. He found me bending over the well-curb, looking at the picture on the surface of the water,—blue sky and maple branch and my face, and around the border, the reflected circle of moss-covered stones. I was wishing a white cloud would sail over my deep mirror to perfect the view. The first intimation I had that Cephas was up was the appearance of his face in the bottom of the well as he bent over the curb opposite me.

"Good morning, merman," said I, without looking up.

"Good morning," answered the apparition ; and by his skill in ventriloquism the voice seemed to come from the depths below. The next instant the fall of a pebble upon the smooth face of our morning mirror dashed it into pieces, and the circles had it their own way after that.

"Do you remember," I asked, "that bit of meadow where the mist hung, on the evening of our return from

the Cathedral? That is the place where I want to go this afternoon, to follow up the brook."

"Go this morning," he answered. "Do you not know enough about woods to walk in the morning in hot weather? They are always cool in the first part of the day; but when the heat once gets in, just after noon, it is sweltering hot, sometimes worse than outside, for there is no air stirring."

"How about your studies?" said I.

"Never you fear. I've worked three hours this morning, while you were combing your hair into my well."

After eating a crusty, bachelor breakfast, we walked through a sparse growth of low pitch pines half a mile toward the unseen brook. We first heard it rippling over its uneven bed, and then saw it flashing in the sunlight. Our ramble led us through a grove of red maples; then into the sweet and flowery meadow, where nature had raised grass for many centuries, never disturbed by the haymakers. Entering the wood again, we had to clamber up a steep bank, down which the roaring brook came in short cascades, with little pools, and quick water between them. Here the growth was beech. The trees on the upland reached high, and there was little underbrush. One venerable trunk, growing upon a platform of broken ledge somewhat higher than the average ground, had so worked its roots as to get into rich soil, and the branches which rose above the tops of the other trees reached out into the genial sunlight on every side; those arms were

noticeably long which had right of way over the brook. A secret spring was pouring its precious drops down the ledge, through the brakes and mosses which almost concealed the jagged forms of the rocks ; and at the foot of the shattered ledge the waters were dark and deep.

As we came up, I saw a trout leap ; but it was too early to think of dinner, and we had no great liking to trout four hours out of the water. Taking a book from my pocket, I secured a good position, not to read but to watch the play of the fishes, while Cephas should study a little more on his next Sunday's sermon. Several arms of the beech had interlocked and grown into each other, after the manner of the tree, and at two or three points presented fair seats to cross-legged clergyment. The Tragabigzanda parson crossed his legs where two branches crossed another at a favorable angle, so near the body of the tree that he could lean his back against its smooth bark ; and he seemed so much at home that I believed he had been there before. Becoming greatly excited in my business of feeding the fishes, I did not much notice the occasional half suppressed grunting sounds that came down from the tree, as fragments of sermon were, one after another, pulled out of the parson's pocket, and run over, to see whether they could be inserted into the mosaic he was composing. But he evidently became excited at the very moment I did. The spotted side of an unusually large trout was flashing on the surface of the pool, when a voice came very emphatically out of the tree,—“Who-

soever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." And this comment:—"The Christian ideal is a life of unthanked self-denial for the sake of others."

I looked up, but the reader seemed to have spoken out unconsciously, and I said nothing. I saw no more flies or fish. What Cephas said, I had once expressed in substance in one of my sermons; and it evidently made a good impression. I had thought of it as an elevated sentiment, not as a rule of life. There was something in Cephas' tone which made me think that he believed it should be reduced to practice.

Following up the stream in all its capricious windings, we talked, hardly hearing the gurgling of the waters among old roots under the bank, or the rush of the current over beds of gravel and polished ledges. Once more I put in the suggestion, always in my mind, that a man of so much ability as I really believed Cephas to be at bottom ought to look about among vacant pulpits to find a fit sphere. I wished that the elements of power in him could be developed in an appreciative parish. But I did not say much. His whole nature was aroused, and no mountain stream ever swept on so irresistibly as he.

"Lean hard toward the side of self-sacrifice," was my mother's motto," said Cephas, taking my arm, and coming to a halt in the narrow trail. "Mission work is the noblest work now in the world. Burmah is better than Boston, according to Dr. Judson. And I would rather be in China or New Zealand than in Chicago or New York, unless it be true that the paganism of our

great cities is worse than that of far countries. The home missionary work in our western territories certainly offers more honorable service than any other part of this country; for there only is it possible to lay the foundations of many generations."

"I hope," said I, "that you prize your mental gifts too highly to throw away your life in work that some one else can do as well as you. This living in the saddle, and devoting one's life to the petty details of new organizations can be done by those not fitted like yourself to be a great light in the golden candlestick which illuminates the east."

"I would invoke a curse," he replied, "upon the man who makes his studies an excuse, as William Farel cursed Calvin if he should put his studies between him and God's call to Geneva."

Then we trudged along, the Wild Man still talking strangely:—

"I would throw up my studies any hour if God would plant me in Japan. But there is no need to quit studying. The greatest mental power in this world will find practical problems to grapple with in pagan lands or in our home missionary work. There is need of all the intellectual acumen that can be mustered. The courses of studies to be pursued will give full swing to the best minds on the planet. Paul was not too much of a man to be a missionary."

And he went on in breathless haste to rehearse the stale arguments I had heard in the seminary by Home and Foreign Secretaries beating up recruits.

He said that his daily prayer was one with that of the missionary in the far East, who desired that the Lord, in mercy to our theological seminaries, would take one-half of all who yearly enter the ministry, and by His Spirit drive them into the wilderness. I went to thinking of something else, letting Cephas talk to the end of the chapter. I merely remember that he spoke of it as the glory of service in our border states and territories that a man could study as much as he pleased, and, besides taking care of his immediate parish, could have to do with establishing the first educational systems in a new country, and do a great variety of work upbuilding church and state. He believed that a handful of men of ability and good judgment and iron will and great spiritual power, could easily shape all things according to their Lord's will.

Coming to a halt and sitting upon a fallen pine trunk whose sap had decayed leaving the great heart still sound, Cephas turned to me, and read from his pocket Testament, the ideal of a good ministry,—“To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.”

As we still walked, it was more and more apparent that a consuming passion for life in the border country had full possession of him.

“If,” said he, “a few persons, having the same mind with the Lord Jesus, will go out into some almost empty section of the continent, when the tide of immigration is pouring into it, they can take no inconsidera-

ble part of the globe and manipulate it with hard hands, and lift over it the hands of prayer, and prepare the way of the Lord. The frontiers of society can be moulded for Christ by Christ-like men. In a little while, this work of being first in the field will be all over. Generations to come will have no such chance as we, to do these first things. To have lived in this missionary era of the church will be always an honorable fame. But what should I say, if in such a time as this, I should lie down and seek my own ease?"

I saw that he was strongly moved, for tears came into his eyes as he was speaking, and the tones of his voice were such that I could not trifle with him or refuse to hear him. There was much more of the same sort.

But he came to a sudden stand-still. We had now reached an open space in the wood, where a birch drooped over a still pool of the brook, and a heavy grapevine climbing over it had formed an arbor. At high-water mark were small blocks of stone, which had been washed and scoured by the stream every spring time. In full career as a western preacher, Cephas stopped; and, first eyeing the sun, put on his coat, took a pin from the lap, drew a fine line from his pocket, and directly drew out of the pool two trout for our dinner. We cooked them in an oven of heated stones. Just as we finished the last potato, I opened the afternoon's business by asking,—

"How comes it that you are here eating fish, when you ought to be beyond the Sierra eating, or being eaten by, grizzlies?"

“Well, sir, to be frank with you,” answered the old Californian, “it is not my own fault, except that I am a queer chicken. Says my deacon, ‘Parson, we are all *curis* bugs.’ Now this is the only reason I am not on the Pacific coast. I preached over here in Shad Village near Pine Cove, for a year after I came home from the West; and then I talked with the Home Missionary Society about going back, and was encouraged to be ready. I gave up my parish, boxed my goods, marked them San Francisco, and bade my friends farewell on a Monday expecting to sail on Saturday, when I was suddenly dropped. Why, I never knew, till my recent correspondence with western friends shows that in my short residence on the Pacific slope, some of the wiser brethren were impressed with the notion that I had more zeal than discretion, and that my eccentricities, growing out of me like the burr of a chestnut, were not calculated to help my usefulness. At least, this is all I can find out; and my conference with the Home Mission Secretaries rather confirmed them in the information they had from the distant coast. And I feel confident that this decision is wise. I am raw, and my judgment is not good. I am branded by nature with a repulsive queer streak I can never be rid of, which, however, I am always trying to subdue. And I am now living in full hope that some day I’ll be civilized enough to become a home missionary. As I am now, it would be too bad to turn me loose on the new communities of the great and growing West. What have they done to deserve such an infliction?”



"Enough, stop there," I cried, punching my friend with a burnt stick. "I think with all your missionary zeal, you are excusable if you stay at home."

We had a little merriment over this defeat of the great emigration scheme. Still, he was planning to go; bound to go, on his own hook, in due time. He had been held back, and was likely to be, by poverty. He preached for almost nothing; and if he had anything he gave it away as soon as he could. But unbounded faith had he, that he would sometime serve on the Pacific coast. The North Star might dodge about the heavens here and there, but he was fixed. Persistent as the Millerites, he made no fuss if he did not succeed; he merely made a new plan. He would in his own mind appoint a time when he would be off, as if this surely would be the time all the holy prophets had agreed on; when the day had passed, he would appoint another, and then another, and so on, meanwhile minding his work. And, according to his own account, he had enough to attend to.

"My school days," said he, "were so short, and my mind is so ill-disciplined, and so meanly furnished, that I would gladly live in obscure parishes here and there till my studies are in better condition."

"My dear Cephas," I replied, "you are chasing a phantom with a vengeance; and you are a Wild Man to follow it longer. The Lord does not want you in California. You fly in the face of Providence. He almost killed you, or rather left you to nearly kill yourself, when you were there; but mercifully spared you

to get home. And then He stirred up prudent brethren and sagacious Secretaries to keep you from a foolish attempt to return. Now if you are a wise man, you will stay here and mind your business. Your business is to study. And if you ever know anything, and can say it, you will be useful. But you already know enough to earn a fair living ; and you ought to know enough to get it. 'Tie your camel and commit it to God,' said Mahomet. You say you trust God for bread and butter ; but you must have good sense about common things, or you will starve. Do you not know that the very way in which God feeds his own, is to make them turn to and help themselves? You are not helping those miserable Tragabigzandarians much by living in rags and upon cold victuals. They can pay you liberally, and they ought to do it ; and it is your duty as their minister to train them into the christian grace of liberality. If you were among a people hopelessly poor, I would not say a word. As it is, you ought to get more money out of them, or to clear out. The world is wide, and it is your duty in some honest way to get money enough to pay your debts, and to have a home of your own. You are doing as much work and as good as many a man with more pay. I am all out of patience with you," I said, placing my hand upon his shoulder and looking into his eyes ;" and if you don't knock the North Star out of your evening sky, it will turn into a comet and lead you nobody knows where, but far enough away from your duty, I'll warrant."

Cephas hereupon whistled ; and pointed me to a woodchuck sitting at the mouth of his hole, into which the creature dove instantly as I looked that way.

“He is a lean-looking chap,” said I. “He must be a parson.”

“He will be fat enough next fall. I have no doubt he is cared for by Providence,” answered my friend.

And then,—to shorten up our long talk,—Cephas tried to prove to me that if God cared only for those who have good sense, nine-tenths of the world would starve.

“They do,” I asserted.

On the matter of training old parishes to liberality, Cephas turned on me saying,—“You are just the chap to make these mean Yankees pay more ; and if there is more to be had, you’ll get it out of them. And there are so many men of just your cut, that I have no fear but the job will be done. As for me, I am going to stand by the North Star. If I have not grit enough to become a home missionary in spite of sickness and timid friends, I ought to move into that woodchuck’s hole and stay with him. And I propose to do it. If I can’t handle my body so as to keep well, I will burrow with these healthy creatures of the forest. And if I can’t knock myself into some shape, so as to have good sense, some day, in managing money, then I will turn fox and live on geese. But if the Lord ever gives wisdom to those who ask it, and seek it, as he has promised to do, then I am bound to have it, first or last. And as surely as the pointers in the Dipper are

always aiming at the Polar Star, I'll keep on aiming to do home missionary work on the border, whether or not the Lord ever lets me go. I will live or die pointing that way."

And he went on to reason that the best thing he could do would be to plan to achieve something, whether or not he should ever have the chance. He believed that God had actually taken men, as contemptible as he, and made good use of them when they had once given themselves willingly into His hands. And he could, therefore, see nothing wild in calmly preparing day by day for a life work in helping to lay the foundations in new countries. His educational phantom, so far from occupying any considerable part of his attention, was, I found, merely one incident in this grand aim to do missionary work. He thought, indeed, that such a scheme might be tried in a fair field, where all experiments have equal chance; but it was not a hobby. If Cephas was fond of riding hobbies, he had, not one, but a whole stable full of them.

We had long since turned off the main stream, and followed up a little rivulet, which was now constantly eluding our sight, though we heard its splashing on the rocks underground. We traced it to its head, in a cool fountain under a great rock near the crest of the hill. No sooner had we passed it, than we heard the faint roar of a distant torrent down the ravine we were about to descend. But when we stood by its tumultuous waters, amid all the uproar, I stood looking at my friend. The sparkling light on the dancing waves did

not attract me so much as he. For I knew that he was chafing like a giant in chains, eager to get away from his beautiful home by the sea. In these enchanting forest paths he was like a war-horse, waiting the sound of the charge. And I could not help feeling that he had a great object to live for, and that his unselfishness was leading him to have the very highest aims in life.

The heat was now great, according to the promise of my comrade, should we stay in the woods all day.

"I see a shower coming," said Cephas.

"Where away?" I asked.

And he drew my attention to a peculiar nestling in the foliage; pointing to certain trembling leaves, and the slight nodding of tall plumes of brake by the brook-side, although the sky was clear.

Our route had been circuitous, and the nearest way homeward was to follow the swift waters. The banks were steep, and we were often wading from one side to the other; much of the time we walked apart, and sometimes the stream divided us. Once it so happened, that, I on the one side and he on the other, each concluded to cross and walk on the other side; we met accordingly on a slippery rock, whose flat head kept above the water. I took this opportunity to deliver to Cephas a small oration I had been composing.

"Cephas."

"What?"

"The Greeks," I said, "peopled the margins of the world, north, south and west, with peculiarly favored beings; while nearer at hand were monstrous giants

and terrifying objects. Ever far off do we look for pleasures, while at home we struggle with want and vexations."

"You can not blame me, therefore," he answered, "if I go west while you go east. You stay at home with the bugbears, and I'll seek the distant paradise."

Twenty minutes later, climbing in Indian file up a steep place to avoid a mass of fallen trees and old drift on the bank, I being in advance ran my head into an enormous spider's web. I caught the spinner and flung him on his own thread toward Cephas, who was looking at my face through the silky net into which I had thrust it.

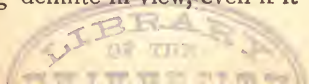
'Do you remember, Cephas, Dean Swift's saying, that, 'It is a miserable thing to live in suspense; it is the life of a spider?' Now, I wish you were either here or in California; but this life of hanging between this and that must be miserable."

He took the spider, and put it into a pill box, as if his old house at home had not vermin enough in it already; and answered,—

"Spiders are the most industrious creatures alive; and so far as I have observed, they appear to enjoy life at least as well as the flies which get caught in their webs."

And he pointed to my face, with fragments of spider's yarn still sticking to my mustache.

As we walked, I thought how hope deferred maketh the heart sick; and in truth I was tired of candidating, and wished I had something definite in view, even if it



was to emigrate to the South Seas. Week after week, and month after month, had brought me no nearer to a settlement. Amid the finest natural scenery, I could not forget my unrest. I began to look upon Cephas as a happy man; only I did not see how he could have the heart to work so like a Trojan for the Tragabigzandites, when his heart went missionarying. But when I questioned him and his people, I had no reason to suppose that his distant schemes made him any less useful in his ordinary work. He was, rather, like a warrior of ancient Rome, strengthened for common conflict by frequent practice in very heavy armor. His hope that he might some day benefit a large section of the globe, and his plans for it, made him carry well and with ease the affairs of his parish. So a brook gets ready to run with the river by running hard as it can so soon as it is born.

We came now to the junction of the brook and the river. An aged willow reached a long arm across the forest stream at the very place where it joined the tide water. Upon the strong branch, half-way over the brook's mouth, I saw that a card had been tacked with willow pins, by some former visitant. Running out to read it, I found, in the original Maxdecroix character, the text,—“He that believeth shall not make haste.” And as I was still looking at my friend's chirography, I heard his voice behind me on the branch, saying,—

“Keep cool. Don't fret. I'll show you how to keep cool.”

And I turned just in time to see his form splash in the deep water below. I followed suit without suit.

It was evident enough that there would be a shower ; and as we did not care to get wet twice, we made for a headland seaward, which was holding up an extended assortment of longhandled, wide-spreading, thick-covered, hemlock umbrellas. The white tops of the thunder heads, and the blue rifts between them, still made the sky bright, while the earth was growing dark. The leaves of the scrub oaks on the side of the hill were twisting in the wind, and a low moaning sound came from the direction of the forest. From the highest pinnacle of the crag by the sea we watched the gathering tempest. Looking over the wooded country, we could see how much the undulations of the forest are like the motions of the waves when agitated by strong tides and fierce winds. The roaring of the wood grew louder and louder. The violent swaying of the tallest tree-tops ; the fitful then steady bending of a white birch grove near us, with now and then torn leaves flying on the wind ; and the bowing almost to the ground of a tall slender elm in the pasture,—prepared us for a crash and bolt of fire. We watched the shadow of the clouds on the sea, and one dark belt of rain pouring into the deep. Cephas drew a tragedy out of my pocket, and read about the storm that overwhelmed Prometheus :—

“ The earth shakes to and fro,
And the loud thunder’s voice
Bellows hard by, and blaze
The flashing levin-fires ;
And tempests whirl the dust,

And gusts of all wild winds
On one another leap,
In wild conflicting blasts,
And sky with sea is blent."

We had no occasion to seek shelter ; the outermost bounds of the rain cloud scarcely covering us. First waiting to see the rainbow sink into the sea, and the "floating fleeces, precious with the gold of heaven," lose all color, and the sea itself put on its night-robe gathered from the east, we then turned homeward. One bird was still flying alone over the bitter waves, solitary as a man of great purpose. When we approached Cephas' homely home, I thought it more homelike. Its rugged exterior and rough inside seemed fit for a man, who with fine natural tastes lived only to deny himself for the sake of others.

When I looked at the North Star before going to sleep, it did not seem so weird to me as the night before in my hammock ; and I was in less fear of being struck mad by it. And since my ability to identify the heavenly bodies was limited to the Moon and the Dipper and the Polar Star, I was rather glad to have a new idea associated with this particular star ; that whenever I should look up from a sidewalk, or peer out of a rail car window, and see it, I should think of it as uttering a voice louder than the music of the spheres.

"Young man, had you not better do your candidating in the service of the Home Missionary Society?"

I awoke once in the night, and heard Cephas talking in his sleep. He seemed to be still wandering in the

woods in the darkness. And he said,—“The birds are quiet; but I hear the brook singing songs at midnight.”

There was a long row of enormous buttonwoods by the roadside upon a little elevation at some distance from Cephas' house, where he was accustomed to walk up and down by the hour together in the evenings,—often when the boughs were threshing in a heavy gale, or again on balmy summer nights under full moonlight; and the invocations which here mingled with the crash of the tempest or rose in the still air of June, were almost invariably for the border country. His missionary plans were little known to his people. And the secret yet full and powerful life he was always leading in this respect, as well as in some others, has seemed to me not unlike certain solitary streams, deep, wide and swift, which run unseen through vast and unfrequented forests. So wide and varied was this man's nature, that whole courses of life might thrive in its secret places,—and his neighbors might touch him and know him only on that side in which he was like them.

IV.

CROOKED STICKS.

IT WOULD be hardly fair to my readers, if I were to remove them from the Tragabigzanda country, without asking them to trace certain steps which Cephas and I took one day for the purpose of looking up some of the queer sticks growing in this forest township. While there is considerable cleared land, yet most of the high hills, narrow swamps and broad plains are concealed by pine, hemlock, cedar, maple, oak, ash and elm, with a liberal allowance of sprout-land. The coast line is made up of a river mouth, with no mean harbor ; three miles of sand beach ; one large marsh with its creek ; one deep cove ; and two grand headlands, connected with each other by a rocky rampart half a mile long, and forty to seventy feet high from the water's edge. The forest is almost everywhere, extending to the shores of the sea as well as far inland. In this heavily timbered town there are plenty of odd sticks. I saw a cane in the jamb of Cephas' big fireplace, which in growing made so many sharp angles that he had cut it as a memento of the "crooked sticks" among his parishioners.

Taking this stick in his hand Cephas and I set out to traverse the town. We came first to the old parsonage, now long vacant. The house was built like a harrow, with a large square head-piece remote from the street and two wings making out toward the highway. The opening of the harrow contained a well with long sweep and oaken bucket, half concealed by a clump of rock-maples. One leg of the harrow was sixty feet, the other forty. The width of each wing was about twenty feet. These wings were one story; the main part of the house, at the intersection of the wings, was two stories. The long ell contained kitchen, woodshed and outbuildings, with a pig pen on the extreme end near the street, although this deformity was dexterously hidden by a thick hemlock hedge twenty feet high. The short ell was the parson's study. Dining-room and parlor were upon the first floor of the main house; with windows looking upon the harbor and sea. A cupola surmounted the chambers, and in its turn was mounted by a brass angel blowing his trumpet against the wind from whatever quarter. The angel was poised over the porch, which stood in the angle made by the two wings. Winding stairs ascended from the porch. We climbed in at a shed window and explored. I found one of the parson's sermons on an upper shelf of the study closet. It was black with dust; but I shook it and tucked it in my pocket. The outlook from the house, on the side next the sea was very extended, embracing twenty miles of coast line. The cupola view inland, outside the village, revealed nothing but woods.

We went into the room where the last occupant, half mad, used to raise his windows on Sabbath mornings, and pray in a stentorian voice for his enemies, when they were going to the house of God, whither he never went in his last days of alienation from his people. He had been a man of considerable force of intellect. But he happened to be the last minister settled in the old method "by the town." Long before his death the people became dissatisfied with this way of supporting their pastor ; and the ungodly delighted to vex his righteous soul. The crooked sticks cumbered his path, and at last tripped him up. I have, within a few days, read in their town records the story of his trials. They had, it seems, agreed at the first to pay him a small salary, and take up for him "two generous contributions" each year. In the major part of his life all went well ; but in later years things grew worse and worse. Pastor and people did not get on together.

He was crooked, and they were crooked. Minute matters were magnified. In the particular year in which he resigned, the town agreed to repair the parsonage fence. The contributions were small ; the salary lagged ; and half the fence was rotten. He wrote to the selectmen about it. They answered, in substance, that they would pay the arrears of the salary sometime, as they paid their other debts ; and that the contributions were "generous," inasmuch as anything was generous which was given as a gratuity where no equivalent was rendered ; and that, as to repairing the fence, one Mr. Dow had worked half a day in patching it, and

this fulfilled their agreement about repairing, for they did not say how much they would mend it. In the ecclesiastical council at which he was dismissed, the most serious charge preferred against him was that he had lied. It seems that he had related to some of his best gossips, certain adventures he met with in a neighboring town, where he went to exchange. He said that he slept little, because "bed bugs as big as horses" kept running over him all night.

When he was about to die, he requested to be buried as he had lived, that is, "crossed." He was buried crosswise of the graveyard ; and there is no monument. So, if we may believe the sexton, who had a particular spite against him ; and who has lately confessed, that he dared obey the old man's wish, in place of the direction given by the conductor of the funeral. That there is no monument, is little creditable to the church ; for he was an excellent pastor before his head went wrong.

After leaving the parsonage, we passed the meeting house, standing in the midst of an old graveyard, and then crossed the river. Entering the woods upon a well traveled road we came in about a mile to a clearing ; in which there nestled a low cottage, once wearing paint but now weather-worn, with mossy roof and swallows' nests under the eaves.

"Good morning, Peter," said Cephas to the simple minded philosopher, who made this his home, as we caught a glimpse of him perambulating his pasture among rocks and bushes.

Pete came to a stand-still, and, leaning over the wall,

told us in half a whisper that he had just returned from his annual visit to the neighboring city Teatown, and that after turning so many corners of brick, he had to walk all day upon his farm to get the kinks taken out of him.

Leaving the road we climbed a ridge on the right, and within half an hour approached the great salt marsh. Here at about eleven o'clock, we found bare-footed Old Butternuts — so called — long bearded, gray and grizzly. He lived in an oil cask, with a fragment of glass over the bung-hole for a window. His nest was lined with clover, and he was just crawling out when we came in sight. Without apparently noticing us, he went to a cold spring near by, thrust his head into it, and then shook his shaggy locks like a spaniel. It was a delightful nook where he camped, amid half a dozen gigantic elms upon a little knoll, close under the well wooded bluff from which we had approached. In front was the green marsh, to the right the blue sea; and between the mouth of the creek and the mouth of the river the long beach. Old Butternuts lived by his gun, fish line and clam fork, and by hunting among farms and gardens on moonlight nights. Upon dark and stormy evenings he made for hen roosts, visiting a circuit of six or eight miles. When it came winter he merely rolled his barrel into the woods, and lodged it in a corner between protecting ledges. If the thicket was not close enough, his axe soon made the den warm with strips of hemlock bark and boughs of spruce. The day we saw him, he was greatly amused, it being

early October, by the removal of two or three wealthy families who had spent the summer on the shore. They were hastening to the city, leaving some of the most delightful days of the year to shine on their empty houses. He called it the early flight of the tame geese ; so early, we should have a hard winter.

Pointing to his double-barreled gun, I asked,—

“What do you do with that?”

“I keep that to shoot home missionaries with. There ain’t a sin under heaven but they’ll stand up for it by divine right.”

Yet Old Butternuts was a religious man in his way. He was always observed upon the Sabbath, sitting bare-headed under a tree, at the usual time of church service. And those who have stood watch at the hour of slumber, say that when he goes to sleep he first prays,—

“Keep me to-night, God ; and free the slaves. And may I wake up early to plunder pro-slavery barns and farms.”

“Do you raise such pagans on this coast?” I asked of Cephas, as we moved forward.

“No, he is a returned Californian ; and my main reason for wanting to go to Frisco is to get the Vigilance Committee to hang such rascals, so they can’t come here to contaminate my parish. He has taught half the young men in this precinct to gamble, and cheated them out of their dollars ; which, it is said, he hides away in a squirrel’s nest.

We dined that day with Tom Parsnip, a small farmer

over the creek, just beyond the cranberry meadow, on the left of the road up shore. His better half was hard of hearing ; and, after we came into the house, we overheard Tom saying in a loud voice,—

“ Sarah ! I say, Sarah ! put more water in the soup. We’ll have company.”

The soup was good, and would have borne more water. This woman Sarah was a widow at the time Tom married her. Parsnip was a little modest about doing his own courting ; and he had employed his neighbor James Raikes to go over to Beanville to pop the question for him.

In consideration of his success Raikes received three acres of pasture. And the gift had proved a singular means of grace to him.

“ See how rank the tufts of grass grow in the middle of this swamp,” said Cephas, as we were walking through the lot. “ This is a cow trap. Raikes is so crooked that he could not get along with his neighbors in ecclesiastical affairs. Three years ago he ‘ signed off ’ from the parish, to which he had been giving five dollars a year. But sometime after, standing one day where we do now, he saw the horns of his best cow sticking up out of the middle of this bog. And he ran into the house, exclaiming, to his wife, —

‘ I am goin’ to jine the perish agin quick as I can. Ole Brindle is sunk.’

“ But he was so angry again, within a twelve months, that he ‘ signed off ’ once more. He did not think, however, to fence in this hole till another cow went

down ; and then he put up these rails, and vowed to join the parish, and stick to it as long as he should live. He looks upon the parish as an insurance company, securing him against the Divine wrath in this life. And it is cheap at five dollars a year."

The great object of our day's excursion was to find Johnny Norwegian, whose rambling along shore gave him many homes, and whom I afterwards found on Cape Anne. Here he was in a walnut grove, near a cleft in the ledge which kept back the sea ; we heard the tide roaring in the long chasm under ground as we came up. He was taking cunners out of an old canvas bag,—so long out of water as to be smelt,—and putting them into a kettle to boil. This was on a Monday, and John never went fishing Monday because the women were all washing, and all water was troubled as if the devil was in it. His house, about seven feet cube, was built two-thirds under ground in the lee of a large stone block left by ancient glacier. With slabs and turf he had quite a comfortable shelter. We found a Bible in the cabin, but he hardly needed to open it, for he had it all at his tongue's end. I hardly ever met a man who knew so much text as he.

It was near nightfall, and we made short stay. Before we left, Cephas told John that I was a minister. He took my hand, saying,—

"Good-bye. Remember what old Johnny tells you. If you want to set the coal in your parish on fire, don't spend the greater part of your time in trying to kindle the cinders."

Cephas said that the hermit was a member of his congregation. Afterwards I often saw him in the meeting house at Manchester. He sat in one corner of the gallery, with hat band full of flowers, clothes tattered, patched, and girded with a red wampum. No man was so attentive to the words of the preacher as he. But the neighbors had whisperings about some crime, which had made him leave his home beyond sea ; and there was a strange mystery about him. No crime was his, however, save that he loved and was crossed in it by the interference of his father, and then fled his country. In the earlier days he bore up under it, and kept to his reason. He was first a farmer, then a shoemaker, a good workman, and not very eccentric. He had the good taste to do certain days' works in one of the most charming interior towns of eastern Massachusetts, Topsfield ; whose hills, and groves and meadows were a delight to him. He was always very choice of his surroundings. If his hut was ever in any town, it may be called safe for summer residents in the country to buy lots near by. A summer resident north, he often wintered in some southern state. He was like a bird, flitting back and forth according to the season. At first he called himself William Williams. But the more he reflected upon the kind of life he ought to be leading with a true home in Norway, the more he lost his mental balance ; and he came to call himself St. John. And he went into the wilderness to live ; and wandered henceforth, never tarrying long anywhere. He kept it up for nearly forty years. Once or twice,

relatives found him, and tried to get him to go with them to take possession of certain estates left him ; but John Comstock died as he lived, a hermit.

The sun had gone down, and we went up from the gray sea to a hill top back of the grove, and after taking one more look up and down the picturesque shore, we descended the northern slope, moving toward a distant arm of the ocean, which was shining under the last rays of daylight. Within a mile we came to a graveyard close on the brink of the sea. And we heard

“The moaning, murmuring waves,
Whose melancholy echoes wail
Beside the lonely graves.”

“I was once passing this burial ground in the road over the other side,” said Cephas, “upon an evening, in a terrific thunder shower. By a flash of lightning I saw a man standing in the open mouth of a tomb close to the path, and he called to me in a sepulchral voice,—

“‘Come in, there is plenty of room.’

“Then came a sharp, almost stunning clap of thunder. And, I confess, I ran like mad. Hearing steps behind me, I turned my head, and with the next flash saw the stout man from the tomb close upon me.

“‘Stop, stop, I want you,’ shouted the apparition.

“And with a spring he clutched my shoulder.

“‘My friend, I want to borrow your umbrella,’ said he who had risen from the grave’s mouth.

“It turned out that he was a wild fellow,—a trout fisher, horse racer, and hound breeder,—living three

miles away ; who, seeing the tomb door open when the shower came up, went in there for shelter. But the roof leaked so badly, that he was quite willing to get out of it, particularly if there was the possibility of a practical joke."

"This same fellow," continued Cephas, "was once used for a good purpose on this very spot. Some years ago, he originated a plot to frighten one of his tavern companions. Two or three of these bar room saints came one dark night to this cemetery,—which is hemmed in by woods each way on the road,—and tied a rope across the track to entrap their comrade who would soon come along on his way home. His horse came to a standstill at the rope, just opposite this row of tombs. And a deep voice from the top of this tall pine, called him by name,—

" 'Isaiah, Isaiah, Come to judgment. Come to judgment.'

"The rope was slacked, and his horse made his way homeward,—the driver half dead with terror. But his subsequent knowledge that it was the voice of a fallen angel he had heard, never shook his resolution to lead a new kind of life. He became a most estimable neighbor, and valued citizen ; and by his consistent christian life, a pillar in the church of the Lord."

At our lodging place that night, I read the dusty sermon I had found in the old parsonage. It showed the material the minister had to deal with in Tragabigzanda. "When I first came to the settlement," says

the manuscript, "I saw many an unpainted house, with clapboards flying loose and rag bags in the windows. Broken wagons were standing about in moss-covered and decaying orchards, hemmed in by dilapidated fences. Lean looking hounds were in the barn yard, and hungry hounds on the door step. Farmers' wives came to the parsonage from all quarters to ask what could be done to keep their husbands from the drink. And when I saw the school committee of the town, and the selectmen, and the town clerk, in procession, wheeling through the public streets a barrel of whiskey to the place one of them called 'home'—I felt compelled to speak out in meeting quite decidedly."

The sermon then goes on to relate how some of his people who had unusually hard heads,—hard as buffaloes,—and could stand any amount of liquor without apparent harm, used to have what they called "Sunday prayer meetings" on a little island down the harbor. It was on their account that the name was changed from Rum Island, which it had borne since a cargo of the stuff was wrecked there in colonial times, to Ram Island. It is intimated in the sermon that the parson sometimes visited this rendezvous to pray for his people. And, according to the manuscript, some of these rocky-headed citizens lived to learn a better use for Sunday, and became excellent members of society; although some determined to drink rum to a good old age,—if only, as they said, to show that it could be done in spite of all the assertions of physicians and fanatics to the contrary.

"I have sometimes," said the pastor in this sermon, "found in a wild dell of the forest, within sound of the sea, an elevated flat rock, which the young men have turned into a card and drinking table. And I have made that rock an altar, upon which to pray for those who gathered there."

The paper throughout has a wholesome ring to it, snugly fitting the needs of the hour. This pastor chose to grapple with the passions of his parishioners and their rampant iniquity, rather than spend the Sabbath hours in quarreling with the heresies of distant doctors. That the sins which afflicted his earlier pastorate had not yet wholly ceased, appears from the closing paragraph:—

"Spiritual struggling and triumph is all that gives dignity to a community. No natural scenery will make up for want of character. To gain moral power in a beautiful region is the only thing worth doing. It is the only fit use to make of the scenery. Those who come to such places only to follow fashion or to fish and to fiddle, might as well spend their days and nights in Sahara. And some of the residents of these shore towns might as well chew their tobacco and spit out their oaths in an alkali desert, as to be riding on this silver tide or coasting these borders of what would be an Eden if it were not for man's sin and God's cursing east wind. As the devil entered Paradise sitting between the teeth of the serpent, poisoning the fangs, so he runs, in liquid form, down the throats of many of our people, and then they act like the sons of

perdition. Such marks of sin on this shore mar its beauty; and it is a blighted garden of the Lord."

After reading the sermon, I asked Cephas if it was applicable to the people under his pastorate. He would not tell me. But I ventured to ask,—

"Why do you want to try a missionary tour in the West, as if your labors were not wanted here?"

"Some of these people may be easily reached," he answered, "and it is probable that some never will be. You remember what the Norwegian said about kindling cinders."

V.

THE PHANTOM HOUSE.

BETWEEN two and three years passed before I saw Cephas again. Meantime, I had found my level in an obscure pastorate; but since it was within a convenient distance of what I considered the center of civilization, I put up with it contentedly as possible. Not yet did the Polar Star guide my life. I was a home missionary through force of circumstances, not by choice. The poverty, however, of my friend and myself was not much increased by spending money on the post office. We had confidence enough in each other not to suppose love extinct if it did not appear by every mail. Sometimes the silence was unbroken for months. We were so unlike that I needed other friends, and he also, to meet certain mental wants. Yet on the whole we were more and more wedded to each other. We understood one another perfectly, and knew just how to get on together. The months therefore led us to rest more and more in our friendship: although I did not understand how he could put up with me, I being utterly unable to countenance myself in certain selfish courses; but he evidently thought me capable of

a higher consecration, and little by little I was led by him.

So our boyhood acquaintance was ripening year by year into a rare kind of friendship, the mutual love of men, who with their own domestic surroundings and with their circle of cares, yet find in each other a certain relation in the highest degree satisfying and helpful, as if for some of the most important ends of life the two were one. But it is impossible that there should be such an one, unless there be first two. Two individuals intensely developed, thoroughly unlike in many particulars and carefully respecting each other's peculiarities, must exist before there can be the highest kind of friendship, though the brotherhood itself is based on mutual confidence and affection, and substantial unity of purpose. Two creatures, who appear to each other a "mere mush of concession," can never love each other. Unlikeness is as needful as likeness in the house of friends; the unlikeness recognized, respected and used. The great use to me in having a friend is to have one who looks at many things differently from what I do: such a man adds to my mental resources and makes me stronger, provided that in the rest of his make-up we are thoroughly agreed.

It is therefore nothing strange that between my intimate and myself certain topics were never touched in talk or by mail-bag. Parts of his interior life were unknown to me as if he had been a stranger. Many points in my nature he seemed to take no more cognizance of than if I had been a Fiji islander. Indeed, if

I had been a cannibal, he would have felt more at liberty to invade my personality. Our sudden visits to each other were therefore often glad or sad surprises, by which new phases came to view, as if we should never cease to delight in the unfoldings of character which new years revealed. I rejoiced with a sort of ecstasy when I was about to visit him, since I was soon to behold some man of great worth little known to me with whom I had formed a secret alliance years before. We loved to steal a march upon each other, appearing suddenly at time and in place the most unlooked for. Our movements were so erratic that I averred of him what he said of me, that no surprise would be excited in his mind to see me riding through the air on a broomstick.

Eight or nine months had gone by without interchange of letters, and I started for Nuntundale. Cephas was living on the island where he had spent that part of his childhood in which he was absent from our birthplace. A fishing village on a larger island connected by a bridge was his parish. I had never been there, but every furlong of the soil had been described to me so often, that I should have known my whereabouts, if I had been let down there blindfolded at midnight. It was late in the winter. A cod-catcher set me across from the main-land, over a mile of rough water. Seated in the stern, rising and falling on the uneasy cross sea, I pulled from my pocket, for the fourth time since I left the railroad, the fragment of a school composition, in which Cephas once described his

"ISLAND HOME."

"The old brown house in which I spent my childhood, was built upon a small island on our eastern coast. Green fields, groves of walnut and oak, and patches of dark fir mark the surface. It is guarded from the northeast storms by tall and torn cliffs, against which the billows lash themselves into foam. These headlands overhanging the sea, rise to a great height. In one place a pinnacle lifts its head above the rest of the wall like a sentinel tower. Inland, not far back from this point, is a huge crag with upright walls like a fort, fir-crowned.

"Upon the extreme northeast point of the island there is a precipice about four hundred feet long and eighty feet high ; so upright that a pebble dropped from the top falls into the surf, which pounds the base with terrific violence when the wind has been out for several days. I wish I could describe its peculiar make. Take a book whose thickness is greater than its width. When it is closed, rest it on its back upon the table, then drop one cover, and you have the leaves like the upright strata of this cliff rising perpendicularly, and the sea is sweeping in over the cover up to the base of the leaves. Where the flat cover now is, there were once leaves, upright, now worn away, leaving polished grooves like the old ways in a ship-yard. The inland end of the rock forms part of a high hill. The end toward the sea has been subjected to cannonading by the waves through so many centuries that each leaf has

been broken. The seaward end of the 'Bald Cliff' is thus made up of fantastic stairways for the sea-nymphs and the mer-men, and boys and girls from the land, to climb over. And here the sea gulls often settle in a white cloud. This book of upright strata was originally three hundred feet thick; about a third of it has washed away.

"All along the east side of the island, the sharp waves have cut strange gashes in the rocks; gouging out veins of softer rock and leaving deep fissures. Between the eastern headlands and the southern slopes, the Middle cove comes far in toward the heart of the island; upon the one side sheltered by steep walls of rock, upon the other margined with an orchard and smiling fields of growing grain. Here the noisy sea-fowl settle down, filling the cove like unwieldy, unmelting snowflakes on the blue waters. Upon the south and west of this little kingdom in the sea, we find the sweet corn lands separated from the bitter brine by a mere belt of sand, which is almost covered at flood tide but six hundred feet wide at low ebb. When I was hoeing corn upon this slope in June days, I was cheered by the measured sound of long rollers falling on the beach. The water is comparatively shallow on this sunny side of the island, while a frigate can sail close to the cliffs on the northeast. On the southwest, the beach makes out into the bar running toward the main. A large open walnut grove, with clean grassed floor, comes down to the edge of the sand where the bar makes off. On the northwest of the island, there is a narrow, but sharply-defined and ragged-edged channel,

over which springs the bridge that leads to the Fishing Village. This little hamlet is situated on the south-western part of an extensive island, which runs parallel with the coast and is separated from it by a wide and deep passage."

This sea-girt home was now before me, and I was soon landed at the head of the little cove, near the middle of the island. The wind was raw from the east, but I established myself under the lee of crags, where a tall spruce had foot-hold near the water. Making as big a fire as I could with drift, I sat down to my watch, like some wrecked mariner cast on the cold coast. I knew there should be three houses on the island, and three I could see. It was the time of day when the parson was likely to be in his study, and within half an hour after my signal was smoking the humane gentleman opened a window, thrust out a telescope, and was soon under full sail down the yard toward the cove,—ballasted by a huge kettle in one hand. Cephas appeared not to notice me. Going to a fish house opposite me, on the other end of the little beach, he opened the door, and presently came out with a fresh cod; then he walked slowly over toward the place where I was lying on a shelf of rock with my feet to the fire. His eyes were downcast; and he came to the fire and began to prepare a chowder without once looking at me. Now I am an expert at chowder; and when I saw that he did not season it to my mind, I could not help speaking out,—

"Take out them onions."

"Onions is good for shipwrecked emigrants," he answered, slicing one more, knowing them to be my particular detestation.

"Cephas," said I, rising, "I can't stand it to be dead any longer, when such things are going into chowder."

"Lie still, lie still, my boy," he answered, "these onions will put life into you."

It was a critical moment, but I approached the black pot, only to find that the bits of onion had been dropped between the pot and the fire. We shook hands over the onions without shedding a tear; though I noticed a strange sadness in his face which his smile did not quite dispel, and my hearty laughter went out over the waters alone. We stirred up the fire, and within the hour my interior life seemed to be warmed up more than it had been since we talked over the North Star's business by the streams of the Tragabigzanda forest. And Cephas' face kindled in a moment as soon as we put our clam-shell spoons into the kettle. Said he:—

"Do you know that I can make you swallow your spoon?"

"Don't," I answered, "or I'll make you eat the kettle."

So as boys, on one wild day in "the gulf," we had agreed that, by using a word reminding each other of that hour, either of us could compel the other to eat as bidden: a safe rule since it works both ways, goose and gander being liable to be served with the same sauce.

After this calling up of the early life, he seemed like a new man, as one awakened from a horrible nightmare.

Cephas appearing loath to return to the house, we did not leave our fire till a dense fog came in near night. The first house on the road from the cove stood on a little elevation overlooking a considerable part of the island. A little tract of woodland on the crest of the ridge, bearing a mixed growth, shut off the view behind the cottage on the North. The buildings were sheltered from the severest winds by the arms of the wood. The house appeared to be empty. There was no fire, and the dust was thick in the corners of the doorsill. A bit of snow drift upon the cold side of the spring house bore no mark of foot or hand. This, I had concluded, was Cephas' old home; and I had looked to see him come out of it to meet me, although I noticed no streamer flying from the great chimney. The weeping elm over the spring house, and the immense buttonwood near the woodshed, I knew all about.

"Do let me," I said, "taste that spring water,"—moving quickly that way.

He grasped me by the arm, and said,—“Not yet.”

Without looking at him, I said,—“I must lie on my back and kick up my heels on that flat stone under the buttonwood.”

“Never!” he answered.

I looked in his face, and saw outlooking some sad mystery I could not read.

“Go with me into the house just a moment, I want to see the attic,” I asked.



"I would not enter that house for all the world," he replied, speaking slowly and in a low tone.

And his manner was such that I quietly followed his leading, neither of us speaking a word ; but he held very fast to my arm, and would hardly let go. His hostess lived in the third house, nearest the town. After tea, Cephas was absent half an hour, going to the village, where sad news from the sea had come to one home that day. My friend's landlord, who gained his living by plowing furrows in the sea and raising his bread from the waters, came in meanwhile, and I soon unravelled the mystery.

When Cephas moved upon the island, nearly two years before, he went to housekeeping in the old home ; and now, within a little time, his wife had died, a babe a few months old going before the mother. My hard habits of single life,—since happily changed for one of the best homes in the world,—were at that time so decided that I could have nothing in common with Cephas, and we had never exchanged a word on matrimonial topics, though I had known long before that he hoped to have sometime what he called a completer life.

It was the early winter when the blow came upon him. He had been over the channel on an evening after a driving, drifting, bitterly cold snow-storm had set in, to see whether a poor woman had fuel enough to wear out the gale. Upon his late return he found the body of his wife sitting in the old arm chair in front of the fire with the open New Testament in hand, but her

eyes had closed forever. An intimate friend, the physician, being late at the house next to them, saw their light after midnight and went in, to find the husband insensible upon the floor where he had fallen by side of the chair. As he was removed, he directed that her body should be borne out to the house of his present host for the funeral, that nothing in his house should be disturbed, that the dress in which she was sitting should be laid over the back of the chair as it stood, and the New Testament left in the chair with face turned down at the chapter she had been reading. So the fire went out upon the hearth, and no one had kindled it, or entered the house since.

His life, as it had been, all stopped then and there. A new Bible, new ink and paper, new garments, and all things new, were obtained for the new man in his life of woe. The only thing about the old house taken away was the key, which for a long time lay upon his table with the key of the buried casket; they were used as paper weights, adding strangely to the weight of his sermons. But their weight almost broke down his study table; and were so heavy he could not move them to another place: he could hardly live with them, and certainly not without them. That house was for a time his terror, and he wished it might burn down. For weeks he never looked at it, though his new home was so near it and in plain sight. But when a great storm came on, and a brig broke up on the rocks at the point of the cove, he passed the house unwittingly in his hurry to help. And since then he had been more

sane on the subject ; but he usually saw it as though he saw it not, and he walked by it as if its place was vacant. One day he took the house key, and threw it into the sea off the Bald Cliff. He had lately finished paying for the house ; and his notion seemed to be to let the thing rot down with all its contents. Recently he had been very busy with parochial work, and to all appearance he would sometime be himself again. There was really nothing disordered about him — only as we all go mad with sorrow.

“ Oh troubles dark, and hard to understand !
Ah, whither will these waters carry me ? ”

“ O Death the Healer, scorn thou not, I pray,
To come to me : of cureless ills thou art
The one physician.”

“ Are the consolations of God small with thee ? ”

“ The polar star, the star of hope, has gone down ; and the southern cross, the cross of sorrow, rises and is borne aloft.”

These were the sentences I found lying under the paper weight on the study table, as the beams of the morning sun fell full upon them. When Cephas came in, I pointed to them, and then to a geranium in the window, and said,—

“ You must do as the plants do, look toward the light.”

We turned our backs on the memorials of grief, and went out into the genial sunlight. There had been fogs and rains, and the wind was still east, but the

morning was clear ; a few brown patches of snow clung close to the walls, and there was as much mud as the soil would make. Passing the bridge and village, we entered a seemingly interminable tract of low pines hung with gray moss. The fog came in, shut out the sun, grew thicker, turned to a dense mist, dripped from the trees, trickled down the beards of moss, and fairly settled into a cold rain about noon. It impressed me as one of the most lonely walks I ever took. But we were dry under our oil garments and sou'westers, which we had taken, not trusting the sun to keep truce with us. All the morning we were not out of sound of the hoarse murmur of the deep. The story of my candidating experiences after I had left Nuntundale, rather amused my friend for an hour or two ; and I could see his delight at my being in home missionary work, as if he had new hope of me henceforth. And he said at dinner time,—when we had our fire roaring in a rocky place among spruces by the side of a creek at full tide,—that he thought my hard work and poor pay was bearing fruit, since he discerned a vein of gentle religion in my talk,—

“You are more like yourself, as you were when a boy.”

When he said this, I began to pull to pieces the little shelter we had built of bark and drift, putting one section after another of our roof into the fire.

“I wish,” said I, as the flames mounted higher, “you had your boy heart again. Your heart is broken.”

For I had noticed all the morning, whatever we

talked about, the consciousness of his sorrow was reverberating always in his heart, like the unceasing roar of the surf, whose voice is heard every moment in spite of the clangor of the sea birds crying in another key. That house on the hill was always before his eyes, even when I was calling up to him the memory of early years, and relating to him every pleasant adventure since we had seen each other. He seemed to be walking in a dream; then his face would light up for a moment. Then he wore great anxiety and looked about with eagerness, as if somewhere there must be an escape for him: like a lost traveler, seeing indeed many things agreeable to the eye, but desirous only of knowing where he is and which way to go.

"The waters of affliction ebb and flow," I said, "and the high tide will soon fall away."

But he made me no answer. And we turned down the tidewater to the low shore of the ocean; and walked on the soft sand just out of reach of the waves. His heart was

"As full of sorrow as the sea of sands."

In going home by the beach, we observed an old custom in our tramping, and separated for some two hours, so that each might have the advantage of being alone, that no day should be bereft of solitude. But my mind was always following my friend, whose walk seemed so lonely, like an iceberg on its solitary way shrouded in mist. It had left off raining, but the fog was thick enough to cut with a knife, and I saw little of

Cephas, save when emerging from the dark cloud of vapor we crossed each other's course on the widening beach, as the high tide was creeping back into the sea. When we were ready to keep company again,—and had so signalled by imitating steamboat whistles answering each other through the fog bank,—we had come upon a shingle beach, after which we followed a well-laid seawall of some length. The mist lightened as we climbed a high headland just before the hour of sunset; and we saw the face of the sun when he went down behind the forests of the mainland. While we were waiting for the sinking of the sun, my companion silently seated himself at some distance from me. "He sitteth alone," says the prophet, "and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him." As soon as the sun's disk disappeared, I turned to my friend, only to see his eyes fixed "like the eyes of those who see the dead." He was looking at the fir trees in the grove, which hid the Phantom House on the hill.

In passing the houses of his parishioners, his mind was diverted; and he told me quaint anecdotes of the people. Here lived Pulsifer, the artist, a mile from the harbor, who, buying a big cod, would tie a line to the tail and drag it home over the rough roadway, so "scaling it" for the fry-pan as he went along. And there in another house was a fisherman half mad, son of the old minister. When his stentorian voice was uplifted in anger, it sometimes sounded over half a league of rocky pasture, and startled the inhabitants of the village. Or he would cry out in his boat in the

early morning, if he suddenly looked up from his lines and saw another fisherman taking a berth beside him; and he did not cease to scare all wild birds with his violence till the invader pulled up his killick and rowed away. But Joe's great horror was the sight of gilt devils' feet, which a cabinet maker on the mill-dam put under his mahogany center-tables. The sight of these carved claws would make him drop his fish, lift up his voice and yell till the demon was taken out of his path.

When, however, we reached the parson's own door, these quaint stories had lost their charm, and the old pain came back. The family had gone out, and I climbed in at a window and struck a light. But my friend sat outside upon the bench at the gate. And I heard his voice:—

“As one alone, once not alone,
I sit and knock at Nature's door,
Heart-bare, heart-hungry, very poor,
Whose desolated days go on.”

Before bed time it was raining again. It was very dark out of doors, and in doors for that matter. But when I went out, as usual, to walk fifteen minutes before sleeping, I saw a cloud broken in the west, and a fragment of light dropping into the opening—star or moon. Looking toward the arm of the sea stretching that way, I knew it to be the moon by the light on the water where all had been dark before. In five minutes the crescent, two or three nights old, had passed the opening and was concealed again, and the rain kept on

pouring all the while. This, I thought, is like the life of Cephas in this settlement, one continuous downfall of grief, unrelenting ; no light can shine for him more than a moment. And I formed the resolution to get him out of the town into new circumstances, before these deadly surroundings should perfect their work. Although I had not myself personally known any deep sorrow, I thought myself abundantly competent to advise.

Dirge-like music from the shore came in at the windows all night ; and I slept little, hearing every now and then the steps of my friend, as he was pacing the floor of the chamber above me.

“This is the twenty-ninth day of east wind,” said Cephas when we met in the morning, “almost a month of rain and snow and fog, and raw breath from the ocean. You and I will go over and see the carpenters, and give them a contract for shingling over the whole northeast. I can’t stand it any longer. I did not notice it till the twenty-second day, but this last week has made me determine that if the wind ever does get round, I’ll climb up to the rooster on my meeting house and nail him, so he will always face toward fair weather.”

By the time breakfast was over, the indications seemed to be good for a big storm and a shift in the wind. The sea was sounding heavily, the slow booming waves of the night being changed for a continuous roar, with high rising spray ; the clouds which had been

opening and shutting since daybreak, were thickening; and the wind, which had been steady for several hours, was now rising to the dignity of a gale. The fishermen were looking after their craft; and all things were being made ready for the shock of wind and wave. While I was looking at the light-boat rocking on the great billows, my comrade had his gaze fixed on the Phantom House. I at once said,—

“You must quit your work, and go home with me a little while. Get as far as you can from that house.”

“I should have gone to see you long before you came to see me, if it had not been for another of my houses,” he answered, pointing away to the northeast. “We will go over there this morning, if you like.”

Well rigged and close reefed for the storm, we went out into it. Fast falling snow-flakes met us at the door, and soon hid the house from our view. Our path led through a corner of the grove behind the Phantom House, and as we approached, Cephas turned to the left of the wood and came into the path again beyond. Seeing this maneuver, whose motive I did not understand till we turned into the same track again, I halted in the growth of low shrubs, thinking to draw him for a moment from the grief which seemed to curse even the trees on our way, by directing his attention to the fine bed of evergreen we were passing over:—

“Do you remember that Thoreau speaks of this as ‘that portion of the summer which does not fade, the permanent year, the unwithered grass?’”

“Yes,” he answered, pointing to the grove, “and I

remember the Chinese classic, that 'Firs and pines remain green throughout the winter, because they have strong hearts.' But I am like this lone leaf on the top of this scrub oak, shivering in the storm."

But the hour of that oak leaf had now come; a sudden sweep of the tempest tore it off and set it flying, and we pursued our way. I had to pull down my hat rim to keep the blinding storm out of my eyes. When, after some time, I again looked up, there came to my mind in an instant the familiar words in my friend's old time school exercise in which he described this part of the island:—"A huge crag with upright walls like a fort, fir-crowned." We scaled it, using hands as well as feet, laying hold of old roots and clinging to cracks and using narrow footing, till we reached the top. Here was a natural fortification, the central part of the top of the rock being occupied by a rifle pit or place for guns, in shape much like a cellar four feet deep. The fir trees upon the wide bank around the rim of the rock, were not so numerous as to hinder the eye from getting full view at every point, under the branches. Many mornings and evenings and noons in fine summer weather have I since spent in this rifle pit, which overlooks a great extent of land and sea,—the view being cut off only by the sentinel tower close at hand in the northeast, and the Phantom grove in the southwest. But in the gloomy hour when I first stood there, I could see nothing but the new turned earth and sodded mound, which occupied the center of this strange cemetery.

There was only this one grave. And it was without monument, except that my friend stood with bared head over it; and then kneeled, then lay down by its side, while I stood afar off not intermeddling in these mysteries unknown to me. Seeing that he was absorbed in sorrow as if unconscious of my presence, I quietly slipped away, and descended from the sepulchral crag by a gently sloping path on the side nearest the sea. When I last looked back, the white snow was fast covering the living and the dead. Making my way to the pinnacle, where I knew Cephas would naturally expect to find me, I sat there alone in the lee of a splintered rock, and listened to the roar of wind and sea.

"If I had a narrow house and deep bed there," said my friend when he rejoined me, "I should be content."

And he sat down with his face to the storm.

"That fresh earth, and the squares of turf upon it, and the chamber beneath it, make up the only home I have in this world. The lowly roof which shelters my dead, is so comforting a place for repose that I often make a bed of boughs and sleep by it. When I am alone with God and the dead I can rest. It is the presence of other thoughts and things that distracts me. Not yet can I be torn away. For the sake of my hours on that rock, I stay in my parish and endure a thousand pangs every day and ten thousand every night. Were it not for this new home I have had to build, I would burn down that haunted house on the hill, and never see this dreary island again."

With that grave he associated no idea of any presence save the clay itself. He was, however, he thought, aided in the apprehension of the blissful activities of another life by dwelling much in that high rock, where as upon an altar he had given up to God the most precious of earthly gifts, the mother and child. Here the visions of faith were brightest, while elsewhere visions of desolation alone met his eye.

We dined that day in the bottom of one of the crevices cut in the coast by the slashing knives of the ocean. The cavern at the end afforded a roof, and we were sheltered from the wind by the rocky walls and by pieces of the wrecked brig thrown in here. From the broken ship we made our fire, heating and blackening the walls of our stone house without fear of burning it down. The sullen shock of the waves sometimes startled us, while the constant moaning of the sea accorded with the feelings of the hour.

"Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all Thy waves and Thy billows have gone over me [Psalm 42: 7]," repeated my companion. And then after a pause he added: "Sometime I shall be able to recite the next verse, not now."

Seeing a ship-worm, warmed by the fire, making his way out of a water-logged fragment of old wreck, which had come in from the seas on the last tide, Cephas said:—

"I am a worm and no man,—this is the text I appreciate now. How lonely is this creature drifting alone on the surface of the deep! And there is noth-

ing strained or extravagant in it, if I say that I feel as desolate and hopeless, as generally broken up, as if I were a mere worm clinging to a chip, riding upon a storm-tossed sea, and conscious of my situation."

We spent part of the afternoon at the Bald Cliff, hiding from the fury of the driving sleet among the great boulders, close by the smoothed leaf of rock called "the ship-ways." The weather was so thick we could not see beyond the surf-line; but this was what we came to look upon, the sharp-toothed rocks mangling the crested waves, and the anger of the sea. We went home in rain not sleet. The beauty of snow on the coast is short-lived, and we walked in slosh.

I could not be easy in the edge of the evening without going out again to the rocky corner of the cove just to imagine how the brig must have looked coming head on. The rain had for the moment slackened. The heavens were black, the land was black, the sea was black; but the coast was lined with white breakers—very white with phosphorescent light—and an advanced line was gleaming over a sunken ledge far from the shore. Two or three distant lighthouses were seen. The wind was so wild that I could hardly stand.

The day following, and the next after that, when the wind did actually haul round a few points, and the day after that when the wind blew furiously out of the northwest, I did nothing but roam the beaches, rain and shine, seeing the billows lash themselves on ledges or shovel sand on the bar. Day after day the surf was dashing high all along shore, like drifting snow. The

spray so filled the air that the island was like a great ship at anchor riding out the gale. And Cephas idled with me in these days, growing, I thought, strong and healthy-toned like the sea; though sometimes a fresh tumult of waves broke over him for an hour, as if the storm in his soul would never be still.

One day going past the Phantom House, I saw that the storm had broken off a branch of the buttonwood and hurled it smash against one of the kitchen windows. In repairing the damage by putting up close board shutters outside, I saw everything about the room standing as the housewife had left it, as if she had gone out for an hour. And the knowledge that no door had been opened, and that no step had fallen on that floor since she cleared up the tea table that fatal night, so impressed me that I could no longer bear to look at the house as I had done. I almost instinctively found myself avoiding the sight of it, or catching it only in glances, as if the dead wife was still dwelling in it alone. And my imagination penetrated that room, where the garments of the dead were still hanging over the arm chair in front of the fire place. I did not wonder that Cephas could not enter the house, though I had once or twice urged it upon him in order to break the spell.

That house was like a tomb, standing for the dead's sake, and not to be opened for light reasons. That the old buttonwood should turn foe, and violate the sanctity of the place, brought Cephas down again in all the bitterness of woe: so sensitive is sorrow. Although

he said nothing, I could see that the great deeps were again broken up. And when I left the island a day or two after, we parted almost in despair: for I could see no bright prospect before him unless he should get away; and he could not for himself staying, and go he would not. So that the diversion of my visit seemed likely to be of no permanent advantage. I had seen hope resting on him for a moment, and flying away; as a bird of passage stops at sea on a foundered ship, and then wings over the waves again.

VI.

RISING FROM THE DEAD.

SOON after Cephas and I had separated in great darkness, the Lord appeared to him with a power never known before. He was able to pray again.

In the strange experience of a soul bereft there are months together when the heavens are brass and the earth iron, and all attempts to pray are made ineffectual by the sight of some haunted house or mound of earth. Not knowing it then, I know it now. In these great tempests the soul can never lie becalmed; it must move toward God or away from Him. God's child will draw near and speak to the Father; and the heavenly answer will fill the soul with rapture.

When, therefore, the Divine Compassion finally led the pastor to think more of service than of sorrow, and the presence of the living Comforter more than of a buried love, there dawned a new day upon him. And, henceforth, he had one rule, that whenever he was tempted to think of his sorrow he would think of Christ instead.

After returning home the first letter I received from Cephas had these words:—"Were God present, kings

and cow-herds would seem alike insignificant to us: when He is in the closet with us, we pay no heed to the raptures or the wretchedness of this world. Tumultuous joy, violent sorrow, and all mental agitation, give place to a heavenly calm; and the peace of God fills the earth."

Letter after letter came revealing what I had noticed in my visit, that the pastor's great sorrow was making itself felt in the sermons and in the parochial work. Old truths were shown in new lights with a new manner, as if with him all things had become new. His love, sympathy, tenderness, severity and decision in dealing with souls, were all quickened. He seemed to have a sense of sin unknown before, as if he had been down into the deeps; and he had new views of the relation of God to man, as a Father and as the Sovereign Disposer. And when he now cried, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," it was apparent to all that he had learned in the school of suffering things never taught in the schools of the prophets. The desolation of the pastor's house was, apparently, one of the conditions for gladdening the homes of his people.

All that springtime and early summer, the Spirit of the Lord moved upon the face of the waters which washed the Island Home; and Christ himself went forth with the fishermen day by day, or brought spiritual healing into their houses.

Before my visit to the Island Home, a young man leaving home for a long voyage, paused a moment for a

last word with his father and mother after the gate had been shut between them. He asked that they would pray for him. They had led godless lives, and not one of the three knew much about praying; but the request often silently presented itself to the mind of the parents. After some months they began to pray in earnest for the son and for themselves, each unknown to the other. In due time came a letter from sea, saying that the son had commenced a Christian life near the time when they began to pray; and he was now urging all prayer for their conversion. So the Spirit of the Lord wrought upon land and sea, with each soul alone. The father and mother now communicated with each other, and erected the family altar; and after several weeks they began to go to religious meetings, to the great astonishment of those who had known their hardihood in sin.

This was soon after my visit to Cephas, and it was the immediate occasion for developing a new interest in spiritual things in all the community. One and another came out into the light, who had been sitting in great darkness during months and even years. Some had been so burdened with a sense of sin that they had pursued their ordinary cares with tears in their eyes day after day, month after month, and, in one or two cases, year after year. The field was white for the harvest, and no man knew it, till one day an aged man who lived much in the closet went to the pastor saying, "The Lord is certainly coming to visit his people." And when the old shipmaster and his wife told their

strange story the ripened fruit was touched, and it fell to the ground.

That very night the floor of the little school-house was filled, as the members of the church, one by one, left their seats and came forward to confess their sins to each other and to the Lord. And when, a few days after, the converted sailor returned from sea, filled with the fruits of the Spirit, and with consuming zeal to plead privately with old companions in sin, urging them to accept his Saviour, the movement began to sweep forward. And the lone working of the Spirit with men apart in their own homes, showed plainly that it was not to be accounted for solely on the ground of social excitement. To the house of his pastor came a young man, who lived at a distance, through a heavy drifting snow-storm long before the break of day, saying:—

“I have served the devil long enough; and I have made up my mind now to serve the Lord.”

It was a practical kind of religion that fastened on the people, turning them into new courses of life. One man was praying all night in a barn, pleading for peace with God. Toward morning, he felt that before God would forgive him, he must forgive his own foes and have them forgive his rascalities. He went at once and waked up his wife’s relatives, with whom he had quarreled for years, and made full confession and full reconciliation.

In this time of general awakening my friend forgot to look at the empty house on the hill, and even for a

time neglected to go to the grave to weep there. Work in the Master's vineyard diverted him from morbid reflections.

In the month of August I went to Nuntundale again. We made a long tramp to the mountain district in the north of the island, and there camped some weeks. Just before we left the high road for the by-ways of the hill country, we crossed a stone bridge thrown over a salt creek which pours into the channel on the west of the island. I could see off to the left a spire that marked the last settlement in the north, where there was a ferry leading to the mainland. Here we rested a little time, stretching ourselves on the cordwood which in long piles was waiting transportation.

"It was just here," said Cephas, "that my brother and I separated, when we both had started to run away. An old pine log, weather-worn and water-soaked, left by some high tide in a great storm, was lying on the edge of the marsh at this turn of the road. We sat down upon it to rest, as we do now; and debated whether to go back or keep on. We rose; I went back, and he kept on. He crossed the ferry to the main, and took shipping to the eastward; and I never saw him again. From what father could learn, we suppose that he must have been killed in the provinces a few months afterwards by the Indians."

Cephas' brother, it seems, ran away in resisting religious convictions: being determined to get rid of home influences and the moral pressure which rested

upon him constantly in the house of his mother. I could not learn that his mother was peculiarly injudicious; but he was a very self-willed, independent lad with a strong love for adventure. He began to rock in the boats of the fishermen as soon as he was out of his cradle; and longed to attempt the world as early as possible. Although his conscience kept at him to become a Christian, he had a very strong distaste for spiritual things. And Cephas himself was much in the same case, strong in spirit, self-reliant, impatient to cut out his own career, and somehow strongly set against yielding to the home training which so powerfully led in the way of a Christian life; though the principle of filial obedience was more prominent in his character than in that of his brother.

Their mother was not only kind after the common sort, but of very deep sympathies to put herself in the place of her children. Her religious nature was so strong that every one felt its influence who was brought in contact with her. Every week since her boys could remember, she had prayed with each alone, and conversed with them about the Fatherhood of God, and His warm love for them, and the Divine help in their common struggles with sin. But the devil took strong hold on them both; or according to Cephas' account of it, they took hold on the devil. The Holy One also bore a part in the contest for the boys. It became hot work; and the evil angel persuaded them to run away. The battle was fought out on this log. Here in this obscure wayside spot, where sleds from the wood meet

scows from the sea, was a great victory and a sad defeat.

As we once more took to the road, I questioned Cephas again and again for his old stories of Nuntundale life and his early home, which he had related to me so often when we were boys together, and very particularly one long string of fish stories which he first told me on a dark and rainy evening, when we were catching horn pouts in a shallow cove of Lake Pennacook.

Our camping place, which we reached next day, was by the side of a high forest lake in the heart of the hills, where a wild stream poured in. There was a little cave in the rocks half veiled by vines; and the growth at that point was open, of yellow birch five or six feet in girth. Across the lake appeared the stern desolation of mountain scenery, with high crags overhanging the water. Going out upon the glassy waves we could see behind our camp, and east, and west, shattered masses of rock rising to the dignity of small mountains from twelve to eighteen hundred feet high. All these hills slope gently to the north, but are precipitous on the south. The slopes are clothed with forest; but the southern faces are very abrupt, ragged and torn, cut with sharp chasms, rough with broken ledges, and rendered unsightly by a criss-cross mixture of living, dying and dead trees, shrubs and thorn bushes.

When we were out in our flat-bottomed boat we felt fierce gusts of wind coming through the gorges or sweeping down from the shoulders of the hills, when-

ever showers were coming up or when the wind was changing. In our hemlock lodge at the cave's mouth, we were sometimes awaked at midnight by the wind suddenly rising and roaring among the mountains; then all would be quiet again in half an hour. So were we fanned by mighty hands, while cities were sweltering. More than once, we went out upon the lake, long after nightfall, to waken the echoes, which sleep among the hills.

Many days were spent upon the tops of the mountains, searching out their different views of forest and sea, and watching the motions of the clouds, as their dark shadows swiftly sailed over unmeasured leagues of wave and wood. The sea, in sweeping around the head of the island, comes very near the base of the hills west and east, and close to the high point on the north opposite our shelter. The deep indentation of the eastern shore of the island abounds in ledges cropping out of the waves; sometimes bare, or, again, having two or three lone trees like ships with green sails; and occasionally considerable areas of rock and soil and tangled wood. There are perhaps a dozen islands of some magnitude. A great part of the water-way between these mountains and the Bald Cliff at the other extremity of the island near Cephas' house, is filled with these islets. They are very picturesque, but prove sad stumbling stones in the way of mariners. These little crumbs and clippings of land upon the one side, together with the windings of the western channel which is often very wide, give the impression as seen

from the mountain tops that one is in the midst of a great lake district, made up by scores of fingers and arms of the sea thrust into uncounted scraps of land. Not uncounted, however. There are just three hundred and sixty-six islands in this archipelago; Lake Millenoket in Maine, Casco Bay, Lake George, and Lake Winnipiseogee having exactly three hundred and sixty-five each. Nuntundale archipelago was made leap year.

The steepest sides of these hills bear abundance of berries, and the woods are alive with small game. Stream and lake are well stocked with fish. About a mile southwest of us was a clearing and small farm; which was our grocery, hen house and dairy. Through this farm runs the outlet of the lake, with mouth in the western channel.

While we were in camp the settler's wife died suddenly. And I happened there the same day. Having first recited some of the customary texts of comfort, I asked him if I should read the Bible and pray with him. Then I went to the distant town to make ready for the funeral. Next day Cephas went with me to the house, and he scarcely seemed to notice the bereaved man when he entered the room, but sat down in silence covering his face with his hand. After a few moments he drew his chair to the side of the husband, and placing his hand upon him, said,—

“I know all about it. I have been through it all.”

Then he was quiet. And when the wounded man laid his arm upon Cephas' shoulder and wept, I saw

the strange freemasonry of grief which made these men brethren. By and by Cephas dropped upon his knees and prayed :—

“We have said, O Lord, ‘Thy will be done;’ but we have not known what we were saying. Is it Thy will, Our Father, that our homes should be broken up?

“Thy judgments are a great deep. Plunging among the billows we rebel against Thee. But rebuke us not in anger, neither chasten us in hot displeasure.

“Our sorrow is continually before us. Make therefore Thy face to shine in the place of darkness. Our souls wait for Thee more than they that watch for the morning.”

This was uttered amid the sobbings of two men, with slow and measured emphasis; and every word was made the prayer of him whose sorrow was fresh, as truly as of him who had the elder grief. When Cephas had again sat silently for some time holding the sufferer by the hand, he rose up with these words,—

“There is nothing to be said. All we can do is to pray. You cannot do that now. I will try to pray for you.”

As Cephas went out, I followed, thinking that I did not know much about comforting the sorrowful with my glib tongue and ready texts. Grief is a deeper thing than I then knew.

It was while we were in this camp that Cephas told me for the first and only time some things about the dead Helen. They had loved each other as little children. Her parents occupied a part of the Phantom

House ; and she was born there soon after Cephas as a child moved into it. Helen became like a sister to him ; and he seemed nearer to her than her own brothers, who were of coarser make. These young friends were very fond of "playing cousin," as they called it ; sitting on the limbs of the orchard or the sill of the woodshed, and in the thousand and one places where children love to play. In this game of kindred they told the most marvelous tales of foreign travel, and imaginary adventure of every sort ; an amusement with all the charm of fairy story, and wonderfully stimulating to the inventive faculty. Helen's religious life, early developed, had a great influence upon Cephas ; and, from one thing he said, I was led to think that this was a make-weight in the scales he balanced, when he sat on the log debating whether to keep on with his runaway brother.

During the years in which Cephas and I were lads together, and in his school days, he kept up a correspondence with Helen at intervals. Oddly enough, as it seemed to me, their friendship had never taken other shape than that of brother and sister. Much as they loved each other, they had at that age no sentiment which looked forward to a common walk together through life. And when Cephas actually "fell in love," it was not with Helen. He dreamed by night and by day of one who certainly never lost a wink of sleep on his account : but he learned eventually to look on these sweet months of agony as affording a pleasant insight into the common experiences of the race, without



which he could have hardly deemed himself human; and the whole thing was laid away in a corner of his mind to afford sometime a paragraph in book-making, as Goethe looked on the different phases of life as only the stuff to make into poems or tales.

And Helen upon her part had just the slightest tendency to minute flirtations, and was not in the least inclined to look with favor upon the rejected Cephas, when, upon a high hill overlooking a broad river with wide intervals, he suggested a formal contract of life companionship. But she had a morbid fondness for graveyards; and, a long time after, he won her at the tombstone of their most intimate common friend, who had been sleeping for years. An infant pine and baby oak were, therefore, planted on the same day; and the plighted friends partook together of a butternut feast. The ill-omened trees died in front of the Phantom House, first the pine, then the oak, long before that house was shut up by the death angel.

Almost every forenoon of the first summer they spent together in their Island Home, they visited the crag where Helen's body now reposes. This was Cephas' study. They had joy and sorrow of their child. Then, after Helen's death, there came to Cephas, for many months, a sense of physical weight resting on heart and brain, and semi-madness interrupted by short seasons of quiet submission and of sturdy rebellion.

Further than this I never learned much about Helen. Cephas was silent as the grave. Her grandest characteristic seems to have been this,—that with a well-pro-

portioned mind she had great power of loving and leading. And her influence on the whole was the most salutary of any earthly power to which he was ever subjected.

“What shall I do with that house?” asked Cephas, after we had broken camp and begun our tramp home down the east of the island, purposing to follow

“the beached margent of the sea.”

“I have not been near it, and I cannot, and will not. I wish you would burn it for me. And then I’ll leave its ashes, and go to some other village to work.”

Finding that I made no answer, he added,—

“It seems, sometimes, as if I had been pursuing a shadow all my life ; and that my love for Helen as my sister and my wife was a vain thing, that she was a mere phantom, dreamed of in a night and mourned for in the morning. I should know this to be so, if it were not for three things,—that crag, that house, and my own character modified by her hand. Perhaps I’d better burn the house: for I will never see the inside of it, or let anybody else. And I’ll take my character and carry it off. After years have passed, when I am changed through new work and new circumstances, I shall look back and always believe that I have had a phantom wife, and that the whole ghostly story is untrue. I shall remember it only as a beloved shadow which followed me in the bright sunshine of life’s morning, disappearing when clouds arose to hide the heavens

and darken the earth. And when, now in a little while, my eyes, long too dim to discern the face of Jesus, again behold Him as He is, He will be to me my constant companion, and I shall be content. The opening heavens will sometime give me my own again ; but we shall then be so thoroughly wedded to the loving God, that we shall forget to blame Him for any fancied unkindness in His strange dealing with us in that house on the hill."

We walked on silently until we came to the shore of the sea, when Cephas called to mind the theory of some of Augustine's contemporaries that the Latin name for "bath" derived its name from its power to remove mental depression. We took a salt bath, and talked no more of graves or unsightly houses.

That night, looking back to the mountains, we saw a red cloud at sunset reposing on the peak which stood west of the lake. After sunset, hard featured clouds marked the western sky. The wind freshened ; and an hour before daybreak, thrusting my head from out our covering, I saw that whole mountain a pyramid of fire. In the tornado of flames, that swept from the north-west over the peak and through the timber toward our camp, the settler's house was burned.

A few months later, when the year was about to come round after Helen's death, I went again to Nuntundale. As that fatal day dawned, all through its gloomy hours and in the early evening, Cephas seemed so much depressed, and his conduct was so singu-

lar, that I felt for the first time thoroughly alarmed. When, therefore, about bedtime, he put on his great coat and went out into the moonlight, I secretly followed him. I saw him stealthily approach the Phantom House and sit down upon the doorstep, covering his face with his hands. So long a time passed that I grew weary of watching, and when I again looked that way he had gone. Hastening to the house, I found that a window had been opened in the sitting room; and drawing near I heard my friend's voice:—

“I give, O Lord, this house to Thee, with all its precious and painful memories. Take it and use it. Fill it with Thy presence, and then I shall think of no other presence here.” Then the voice was low, and I only heard uncertain words relating to “the old red trunk.” And then the question,—“Is not life, O Lord, made for work and not for mourning?”

In the long silence which followed, I saw, in the full moon's light, that he was kneeling at the arm chair with the dress of the dying hanging at its back, and the New Testament in his hands. And I could not resist the suggestion made by my privileged friendship to enter and kneel by his side, which I did without apparently attracting his attention.

“Let me, O Holy One,” I said, “be instructed by sorrow without passing through it. Make my heart soft with sympathy for wounded souls; and make my hands hard with toil for them. And may I sometime know what it is to say ‘Thy will be done.’”

“No, O Lord, I dare not pray so. Not yet can I

ask to be taught that lesson. Not yet am I ready to be torn in pieces, and thrown helpless at Thy feet. Nevertheless, teach me if I must know it. And let not my life pass by without life's best discipline.

"And now, Thou Infinite Spirit, fill this house, and make it fit for habitation. Thou who art the Companion of men, Bridegroom of the soul, take Thou this lonely man. May he bear the choicest of earthly names, and be called 'the friend of the Bridegroom.' Place Thy loving hand upon him. And may this desolated house be one of Thy many mansions. Prepare it for him with such furnishing that here and now he may find heaven in it."

We went to the shore, and Cephas flung the casket key into the deep waters. And the next morning I saw another key upon his study table, marked "The Old Red Trunk."

Those who are novices in grief need not read the wicked thing I am about to say. But those who have grown old in sorrows must have learned to do one of the most fearful things we can dream of, in deliberately turning their backs on dear graves and forgetting the dead. The most sensitive spirits in the world come so near to the bitterness of death or to madness in their experience of suffering, that as a mere sanitary measure they must firmly, in unutterable agony, turn away from the dead. For the love of God they must do it. They must not use up all the powers of life in mourning, but turn away and seek to serve the living. Who does not know that we may not dare to get all the benefit of our

greatest griefs in this life? From many of our heaviest sorrows we receive some advantage, then we are compelled by the weakness of the flesh to lay them aside for a time, and recur to them as we can bear it; but we can hardly hope to have strength to face them fully till we are rid of our flesh. And then, perhaps, we shall be so taken up with the glory revealed that we shall forget that we had great complaints to make to our God.

Late in the winter, I received a letter from Cephas, in which it appeared that he was living in the Phantom House, at work on the Red Trunk.

“I had a terrible time in re-arranging the house. I am not yet myself again. God leads me, and I cling fast to His hand, sadly stumbling in the way and blind with tears. Whether on the whole I grow strong or weak I cannot tell. I think that I am growing stronger, for I suppose the process ought to tend to that; but it is a very weakening way through which to gain strength.”

A month later he wrote:—

“I know that somehow I have come into possession of a mourning ring. A wicker work basket is on my table, with thimbles and needles and half-finished work. Articles of woman’s dress and ornament are continually in sight. I find, too, a closet and trunkful of clothing and housewife’s work. How I came into the possession I know not. I do not dare to search the past and find out. I have bitter pictures in my mind that I

shut off as soon as they appear. I remember a casket, and funeral songs, and a winter scene at the grave's mouth. I have also in mind what would be the gladdest scenes in life; but they are so deeply shrouded in black that I dare not think of them. I am conscious that my inner man has been greatly changed within a few years; I have however no heart to analyze the matter. I only drive straight on with no retrospect; and pray God for help to do His will each day. I am satisfied that I can never think my way out of these difficulties, but I can work my way out."

As the religious quickening of his people the year before had begun to divert him from his grief, and to reform his shattered habits of work, so now a rigid adherence to the business of putting an extension on his Red Trunk, led him little by little into a normal state again. And the cultivation of the acquaintance of the Heavenly Friend gave his heart rest. The tendrils of love fastened more and more upon the Undying One. By personal contact and by his letters I saw the work going on, a man deliberately shutting off the precious thoughts of grief, when half their treasure had not been wrung from them. And I saw, month after month, that he was still afflicted though consoled, as the sea is still rough long after the heavens are clear and the storm is past.

During many years, amid all the eagerness of new courses of life, the memory of the old grief came sweeping in most mournfully through the early months of winter. Looking back now I can see that while the

Holy One forsook him not, he rather needed the loving hand of an earthly companion, for his lonely life in later years lacked a little that nice balance and fair proportion which Helen's friendship was likely to give. He needed to be anchored to a good home. "Where no hedge is there the possession is spoiled: and he that hath no wife will wander up and down mourning."

It shames me that I was no more to him than I was. But he clung to me after Helen's death. And though I had my own house in time, yet so far as man and man can be one in love we were more thoroughly united than when we were children or in the earlier manhood. As the interior life unfolded our love grew stronger, and somehow we fitted the better into each other's personal peculiarities. His thoughts of Helen fastened upon her new experiences in the heavenly country. And no child's vision of life in the romantic isles of distant seas is so sweet as that which every friend has of a future reunion with loved ones in the Unseen Country. Do we not love our God the more for that wisdom which so made us that we need finite friends as well as the Infinite. For human love

"is the scale

By which to heavenly love thou mayst ascend."

VII.

THE FISHING VILLAGE.

CEPHAS' Island Home,—his birth place and his house of sorrow,—is a hallowed memory so sacred that I hardly allow a year to pass without re-visiting it. While it is not now as it was then, yet the spot where Helen's body lies is a shrine to which I can never forget to make my pilgrimage.

The reader will, however, bear with me, if I also state that whenever I cross the bridge from the Island Home, and enter the Fishing Village which was Cephas' parish, my emotions are altogether of another sort. I may as well say frankly that it is a great diversion to me to go there year by year. And the mental make up of my friend Cephas can never be understood without some acquaintance with this town; since, whether or not he helped make the town, he was himself marked by the men he worked with and by the material surroundings. Cephas always expressed the warmest affection for the people of this village, so kind were they, so frank, so hearty in good traits as well as bad; but I have sometimes thought it was, after all, the quaintness of both people and town, which held him so

fast to them in all after wanderings. He always spoke of this village as his home, not so much because it was associated with his childhood, as on account of his connection with it in more mature years. He loved every rod of the soil, the rocks and the buildings, and all the sinners and all the saints who dwelt there.

Men and women abiding in sober villages inland, have little idea of the way people live in some of these towns by the sea. The Fishing Village is a queer old place. Rocky ledges rise here and there and everywhere between the streets, so that the houses are nearly all backed up against granite ; and the roads are so crooked that all foot passengers go cross-lots, and the gardens and backyards are dignified highways. Notices to keep off are good-naturedly put up, only to show bad spelling or grammatical, punctuational and chirographical errors. Doctors of divinity climb fences like boys ; and you may look out your back window and see the first selectman or the town schoolmaster or the senior deacon walking along a sharp ledge in imminent danger of falling into your hen-roost.

The buildings are cut into all manner of shapes, some like a doughnut and others like a bowling-alley or rope-walk. Where the houses are founded upon a rock, the bottom weatherboard is so notched and whittled as to fit snugly the uneven surface. Sometimes the rocky foundation falls off steep four feet from the front door ; and, even then, all the modern improvements have to be brought round to the front of the house, because the rear is so pinched up. Children

slide down smooth rocks on well smoothed seats, wearing out trowsers and skirts in a manner shocking to everybody but the mothers, who do not appear to mind it. Goats and cows stand against the sky upon the top of precipitous rocks rising sixty feet above the street, and there picturesquely chew and meditate in the early twilight.

Many old houses are seen where three or four generations have lived; and each family has made an addition to the mansion or subtracted from it. Several of these buildings are on what has been called Hero street since the war for the Union. There are not twenty houses on it; but more than half the families suffered from wounds or death. One of these heroes in the trenches at Knoxville, picked off seventeen men in one day with his rifle, as if he had been partridge shooting in the north woods.

Some of the houses are so old as to antedate civilization. Here is one log-house which has worn clapboards so long, that men have forgotten what it is made of. Pull off this painted cuticle, and you have one of the first settlers. In like manner, if you were to tear off the clapboards on the front side of the principal dry goods establishment in the town, you would find the doors of a barn.

One day when I was passing through the village, a house which had been occupied as a tavern, so long ago as when witches were swinging in Salem, was in process of demolition. Like an aged lobster putting on a new claw, this old house had many years since

developed on one of its extremities a new dwelling; but in this case the claw was bigger than the original lobster and better too. Hence, as the years rolled by, the old shell became less and less respectable; till at last its age was its only recommendation. At this crisis the old thing was owned by a Frenchman, and the new thing by an Irishman; the former every inch a hero and devoted to his new country, and the latter a most estimable citizen. The man of Erin, however, felt a little loath to separate the old shell from his house; and the man of Gaul wanted the ground the old relic stood on to raise sorrel for his delicious soups. Moreover, the Hibernian had in his chambers a tenant not having all the Christian virtues; and the gentleman from France, as great a tactician in his way as Napoleon, set about getting rid of his neighbor's tenant and his own old house by the same bit of strategy.

For this purpose he employed a good hearted fellow and skilled workman, now happily a sober man and excellent neighbor, but then burdened year after year by hard bondage to his cups. He is now ready himself to laugh gaily over his old misadventures as well as to mourn his former misery. He can well afford to be merry before men and thankful before God; for there is no man in his town who has proved himself to be so truly a nobleman as he in heroic self-conquest and triumph over temptation. This young man with his bad habits was put into the old tavern house for a tenant; and by the time he had several spree the Celt surrendered at discretion, dismissed his termagant, and

began to tear the old house down, so that the French artillery was withdrawn.

Best of all, however, was the attempt made to reform the unfortunate slave of drink by keeping him awake nights killing bedbugs. It was anticipated by his landlord that he would earn his rent; but the influence of the conflict upon his habits was known only by trial. The neighbors, at any time of night, during certain seasons of the year, would look out to see the exterminator of vermin going about his house with a candle, passing one window after another in search for the enemies of the peace of his family. As a devoted husband and affectionate father, in his sober moments, he wished to preserve some fragments of his loved ones from being devoured by the innumerable hosts, which had occupied that house since 1690. These old pensioners which had come down to him from a former generation were therefore ruthlessly destroyed; and this work kept the man sober during no small fraction of the year. What temperance societies had attempted in vain, seemed now about to be accomplished by these ante-revolutionary reformers. But the witty fellow learned their habits, and between their semi-annual seasons of activity, he would have his drinking frolics. And so, at last, he had to move out. On the very morning I passed that way, I saw the tenant disputing with his landlord, and offsetting the rent bill of six dollars with a bill of twenty dollars for vinegar used up in pickling the foes of his family.

As I stood by watching the lively timbers, expecting

to see them dragged off bodily by their inhabitants, one of the principal citizens of the town seeing that I was a stranger took me in, so far as his confidence was concerned ; and I was shown some of the lions and lions' dens of the town.

We went to the court house, where Captain Colby administered justice. The Esquire was fond of legal phrases ; but when a sharp lawyer, in a case of assault and battery, insisted upon a definition of the term *prima facie* evidence, the court declared that—" *Prima facie* evidence means hitting him right in the head."

Close by the court house stood the antique school building ; where the master, in former years, used to punish the boys by shaking them out of the second-story window. My guide had a vivid memory of the day, when he was thus held by two strong hands with his face downward, and snapped till he thought the homespun would give way and let him out.

Next to this seminary of learning lived Captain Bill Tucker, the truthful skipper, who once lost his watch overboard as he sailed into the mouth of a distant port ; by notching the ship's rail where it went down, he found it when he next sailed that way, and took it up with his long tongs. "And the most remarkable thing about it," added Captain Bill, "was that it was still running." He could not account for it, unless it was the daily running in and out of the tide that kept it wound up.

I went round to one of the houses I had passed with Cephas, upon that drizzly day of our mournful walk

when the Phantom House was always in sight. Here dwelt Pulsifer, an itinerant portrait painter, who scaled his fish in the sand. He trundled a wheelbarrow in his travels, so as to have a seat handy whenever he wanted to rest. Picked up dead drunk one day, his obituary was printed; and it so angered him that he threatened the editor with fearful punishment if his death should ever be put in the paper again, unless he should give personal authority for it.

The aged fisherman, in the next house, had a little notoriety among the boys for his fairness to fish; always tenderly taking off the hook and putting back into the water any that were unfortunately drawn up by accidentally catching on the sharp point in his pulling it up, when they were not biting.

Hanging around the loafing places of this village, I found men, who fell further in Adam than any other lot I ever came across in so small a community: beetles of the dunghill type, loafers too foul to live; long and lank and also pot-bellied rumsellers, cursing their neighbors' children; poor fellows oscillating with fearful regularity between their own tumble-down homes and well-to-do grog-shops; lazy bones wearing out their clothes in sitting on dry-goods boxes while their aged mothers had to cut their own firewood.

Again, there were men, following what Captain John Smith off Tragabigzanda called "this contemptible trade in fish," who would have been a credit to the company of the apostles. When an old gambler thought it the respectable thing to join the church, he

was told to make application to him who was called "the Apostolic Fisherman." Edward Lee answered that he would let him know "if there was any vacancy." This fisherman had more skill than most pastors in leading men out of darkness into light.

It was the apostolic man, Edward Lee, who was to Cephas more than all books of comfort save one. He had buried his own wife years before, and his sons were on distant voyages. In the first place, he had the good sense to let his pastor alone. Not so, Simeon Thorn, the fish merchant, who met Cephas within a week of Helen's death, and said,—

"Sair loss, sir. But you'll soon git over it; and marry, maybe, a woman 'ill suit you better."

Did not Edward Lee leave his pastor to his own sorrow? To be sure he saw him on the day of the funeral, and he took hold of his hand; and his own hard hand was soft with sympathy; and the tears rolled down his weather-beaten cheeks: but he did not say a word, not he. And when the sad procession started for the crag, Lee saw the pastor walking alone, and without saying—by your leave,—he walked beside him.

"At first," said Cephas, "I was shocked, but when I saw his face wet as if a northeaster had blown the brine into it, I took his arm: but he did not speak to me."

Lee went to the parson's house next day to see if he would try a line for cod. And they sailed many miles over the blue waves amid white caps: a miserable day

for fishing as none knew better than the skipper ; but a good day for sailing amid the crested billows.

“ For the hour,” said Cephas, “ I forgot my sorrow ; but Lee did not speak of Helen. Just as we touched the wharf, however, he told me about a young man who was very thoughtful about spiritual interests, and asked me to go and see him. And, in seeing him, my mind wandered for the moment from the great grief.”

Lee was the main stay in the great religious reformation that followed.

When the mackerel season came round, as they were following the schools, the rough man tenderly told Cephas the story of his own dead wife. “ He made no logical ‘therefore’ and ‘application,’ ” said the pastor, “ but I could see that he understood my case.”

This same wise man, not long before my second visit to the Island Home had exchanged his fare of fish for a half barrel of old books in the metropolis ; and as he trundled the little library to his pastor’s door, he said,—

“ I must be plain with you, minister. You need to rise up from your mourning like a man, and go to work. You don’t care for cod and mackerel catching : an’ I have brought you other fish to make.”

It was this scaly library that had given Cephas the impetus he needed to go into the Phantom House to reopen his Red Trunk.

VIII.

THE OLD RED TRUNK.

THE SUMMER after our camp in the mountains, I found Cephas in a new parish in another part of Nuntundale; on the mainland, but still by the sea shore. It was one of those towns whose chief characteristics are pine woods, sandy roads and red farm houses. Entering my friend's study with feet of wool, I found him bending over his Old Red Trunk. It was full of envelopes and paper-bags, stuffed and labelled.

"What have you here?" I asked, in a gruff voice, close behind his shoulder, "Garden Seeds?"

"Yea," he replied, "seeds for the garden of the Lord. Won't you have some?"

And he held up a two quart bag, filled with little scraps of paper scabbled all over in lead pencil. These were "ideas," I was informed. The trunk would hold about a bushel and a half I should think.

Turning to the study table, I found a hammer-head lying on it for a paper weight. It had been made by a man, who began life an obscure blacksmith and rose to fame among all carpenters, by making the best hammers in America. His motto was "not to undersell but

to excel,"—to make the very best work and charge price enough to pay for it. He had often stood at his forge fifteen hours a day.

Looking upon the wall over Cephas' study table, I saw the words,— "Good work wanted here."

That evening, strolling on the beach, we had a long talk about this trunk business. Heavy and substantial as it appeared, it was nothing more nor less than one of my friend's phantoms. At least so I thought then. He was aiming to learn to write, as well as he could, furnishing himself with the best raw material, trusting to years of discipline to teach him the art of putting things. This simple purpose, which he had early formed, was now bearing hard upon him with all the weight of iron necessity. The Old Red Trunk, which was his storehouse of writing stuff, had controlling sway over his soul; all things bending to this.

I had seen the face of this phantom before. It was one of the things Cephas talked about with me in the woods, when we were boys together. So great was his diligence in his school days, that he was very foolish and very wise in the same act. He neglected to go to a neighboring city to hear an eminent orator, saying that no one would ever stir out of his tracks to hear Cephas, if he did not stick to his study and learn how to use the English language to some purpose. Wisely minding his business, he knew not that he would be helped by listening to one of unsurpassed skill in speech. He was intent on one thing; he was mad to learn how to write. I have known him, more than

once, to spend a whole half day walking in mud and rain, manufacturing a sentence, which supplied only four or six words to his sermon.

"Great fool is he," said an old man, who sawed half a cord of wood in my shed while Cephas put twenty words together.

I thought it the height of folly for Cephas to try to gain skill in the use of the English language; but I had great hopes of myself, for I could compose two pages to his one. He was always seeking an ideal too high for me to think about. When he first began to read the Greek authors he was often at me with questioning,—What are the elements of enduring power as an author? Is it possible to do good work which shall stand age after age? Once, when we were talking all one winter night, Cephas suddenly roused up towards morning in a great state of excitement about the pyramids. The hills, he said, were leveled to make standing places for these granite piles. A hundred thousand men then worked ten years in preparing a causeway by which to carry stones, before they were ready to build.

"And," said he, sitting up in bed, "it is by some such laborious preparation that we ought to make ready for doing solid work that will stand through the centuries. We must labor patiently through manifold years; planning far ahead, not being afraid to take a score of years for getting ready to do the work of the next score. I expect to live till I am sixty, and I mean to calculate accordingly. If I don't know enough to



make a consistent plan for forty odd years of hard work, you may write me down a fool."

The only reply I ventured on, was to tell him that he would die before seven, if he did not go to sleep before six.

Now, twelve years later, I saw the same wild notions possessing him. Here was his Old Red Trunk, which had been carted and sledded and shipped many thousands of miles since his father bought it when he started for the academy: here was the original school boy's treasure house, which had held walnuts, doughnuts, apples, apple-dumpling, stockings out at the heel, rent trowsers, lexicons, pocket libraries, fish-lines, knives, a short rifle, foul linen, white vests, old shoes, boot blacking, and at least once a lot of perfumed love letters tied up in white ribbon: here was this old red haired stager now turned into a receptacle of "ideas," good, bad, indifferent,—facts that were not facts, bad logic, mixed metaphors, similes in shocking taste, a peck of quotations from Thomas' Almanac and Tom Hood and Tom Jones and various poets and professors and philosophers, with pen sketches of savages and hints of adventures and authentic stories of ghosts and nightmare;—all this was the beginning of his stock in trade toward some kind of authorship, be it sermons or what not: this was the Old Red Trunk; and he was likely, I thought, to go mad over it.

"I tell you what it is, Edward," said Cephas, as we were stretched upon the sand at the verge of the incoming tide, "I would not give much for my life's ministry,

if I were not to take the first ten years of it to prepare for the rest. My school days were cut short, and they must be lengthened. If it was wise for me to go to the schools at all, instead of imposing myself on a parish as soon as I determined to be a minister, I am now right in thinking these first years of parochial care merely preparation for the better work I ought to do. Wisdom justifies me in moving from one little parish to another to accommodate my studies. I have no purpose to settle down and stay put, till I get through the course I am now engaged in. And I hope, before I fairly complete it, to be out upon the border where I belong."

It appeared, as we conversed, that some years since Cephas had mapped out a ten years' plan of reading and investigation upon the topics taken up in a theological seminary course; and that he had been systematically studying biblical literature, theology, ecclesiastical history and homiletics. Courageously carrying forward these studies week in and week out, he had, meantime, faithfully performed parochial duties, and preached as well as he could without interfering with his regular work. Whenever his studies asked him to move, he pulled up and was off; and then set down his Old Red Trunk in a new place. By occasionally moving, he could manage the pulpit supply more easily.

"What business," I asked, as we drew back a little to keep out of the rising water, "What business have you to be reading so much in church fathers, old histories, antiquities, no end of dry commentaries, tough old

fashioned theology, dead sermons of dead men, books of hard science, amusing travel, entertaining biography, essays and poetry, when you ought to be making new sermons every week for your people?"

"I am not ready to make sermons," he replied, "I am not yet in the ministry. I am only a theological student; my ordination ought not to stand in the way of my usefulness. I would as soon think of hugging a planet, as to try to handle some of the topics upon which I ought to make sermons. It is suitable for me to testify my love to Christ, and earnestly call all men to Him, and work hard to bring them, but I am not ready to fulfil my ministry.

"Is it not right to devote a fair section of life to furnishing my mind with materials for better work in sermon making? Do I not need to be informed, and to gain discipline in the study of the highest themes? Unless I read most carefully and patiently some of the best books in every department relating to my profession, I cannot attain to the highest usefulness possible to me. I ought to attempt more than mere extemporizing on paper. Instead, therefore, of beginning my ministry with spending four days every week in preparing one sermon, I set out long ago to take four days every week for study on my carefully selected course of the choicest books in the four departments of theological training: thinking as hard as I can in connection with the reading; and writing down my thoughts at the time, and filing them away in paper bags for my Old Trunk.

“Some of this stuff will be of use to me, when, after a few years, I give four days in a week to making sermons. No small part of these paper scraps will be burned; but that will be better than if I had put them into shape and called them sermons before burning. What I chiefly value in this course of study—far above these miserable notes—is the mental discipline I gain by it. More breadth of thinking, and depth, and force,—which I so greatly need,—should grow out of long, close and quickening contact with the best thinkers of the world. ‘Narrow, shallow, forceless,’—are the words to write on the outside of my sermons.”

“Well, I guess you are right on that,” said I, pulling off my boots. “But what was that I heard you say years ago, about your writing books? If you can’t make half a barrel of sermons without studying twenty years before you make one, it will take you at least a century and a half to get ready to write a book.”

“Well, sir,” he answered, taking off his coat, “I don’t propose to write more than a mackerel kit of sermons.”

“That is the right figger,” I exclaimed. “‘Stale, flat, and unprofitable’ as salt mackerel.—Hamlet.”

“If,” continued Cephas, “besides all the things I make in the name of sermons,—extemporizing on paper or in the pulpit to keep the Sabbath services fresh and profitable,—I ever have two hundred carefully prepared manuscripts, I will re-write and condense again and again, till the result of forty years’ study is packed into fifty compositions. And if all the mental discipline and power from on High that I can get in

forty years of close work directed to a single end, cannot put together the ideas I may acquire so that they shall be readable, I have no purpose to become an author. I propose for my first and only business to make sermons. The current wants of my people I will meet today. And if, thirty years hence, my life work in the study is boiled down"—

—"Maple syrup"—I sweetly inserted—

—"Into half a dozen thin"—

—"Too thin"—said I—

—"Volumes, I hope and believe that they will stand a better chance to keep out of the rag-man's hands than if I were to leave eighteen hundred manuscripts."

—"Good. If you leave fifty, that will be enough."

After this homiletical discourse, we went in swimming. It was a hot June night with the wind off shore, and uncomfortable anywhere beyond six feet of the water line. After paddling about awhile in the phosphorescent brine, we walked up and down the beach, still talking.

"What a revelation there would be," said I, "if your Red Trunk were opened to the world, and published as Mahomet's scrap-book was. For I have read that part of the Koran was written upon 'date leaves, and tablets of white stone, and shoulder bones, and bits of parchment, thrown promiscuously into a box.' If I were you, I would not run the risk of having the good and the bad published together, by some devoted friend and follower such as I am. You know that I fully expect to survive you. And I shall have the fun of

picking out of this trunk white shoulder-bones, written all over with sentences 'which the world would not willingly let die.' But I doubt not, there are some bones that ought to rot. I hope, therefore, that you will not put off book-making till you die, and leave a bad job on my hands."

"Herschel," he answered, "had pluck enough to spend eight years in South Africa, making observations for a map of the stars of the southern hemisphere ; and then to work for some years at home in completing it. I should be ashamed to be so short-sighted and petty in my planning as to think that I must do and die to-day. I will plan for longer and larger work : and if the Lord removes me before the work is done, that is His care, not mine ; and He is the One I work for.

"Long headed merchants, the solid men of our great cities, are what they are, because they are far-sighted and far-reaching. They make plans which require many years ; building up new trade with distant countries, and organizing works which are the pride of the world. If they were content with the petty projects of peanut peddlers, they would be like students who have no purpose reaching beyond to-day, who live as it were from hand to mouth. The peanut business is not to be despised : but it is despicable if one never aims for the noblest things in life. I do not expect to make great attainments ; but my work is so poor and my mind develops so slowly, that it is every way better for me to take up a considerable range of study before calling any writing completed even after my sort. The books

I read, and the thoughts I have, will throw light on each other ; and my style will get more settled as the years go by. Time matures thought. Experience in life tends to give good sense. The ideas which have ripened during many years will be worth more than the raw conceptions of early life.

“ My object is not primarily to print ; but to prepare myself to make sermons. And if, after going over certain ground again and again, in the reading and thinking and life experiences of forty years,—presenting the best thoughts of all former years with the additions and subtractions and modifications of matter and style suggested by mental growth, first in one shape and then in another, and then again and still again in what I suppose to be better shape still,—if, after all this, what remains in the bottom of my Old Red Trunk is worth printing, I have no objection to its being done : albeit, somebody else will look over proof, and trade with publishers ; when that time comes, I hope myself to be in business more to my mind.”

When, that night, we kneeled to pray before sleeping, it was plain that Cephas was in some such intellectual and spiritual glow as characterized the peculiarly exalted moments I had noticed in his childhood.

IX.

WHERE TO KEEP IT.

NEXT day we went out at about ten o'clock, to sit under the elms upon the "village-green." This plot of land was green, but there was no "village"—save one meeting-house facing east, one store fronting west, and one house looking south. On the south an open plain extended half a mile to the sea. Mr. Strutt's mansion was large, square, white, with ample yard and high fence; a big chimney outside, and huge fireplaces with plenty of good cheer inside. Mr. Strutt's store was small, white, cosy, and not much disturbed by trade. The meeting-house was one of those barns which the puritans built in place of cathedrals. It was surmounted by a short bell tower and a wooden monument on top of it, as if some former minister had been buried there.

Cephas and I had not proceeded far in our talk on the question,—Where to locate the Red Trunk, in a big parish or a little one,—when my attention was drawn off by seeing a short thick-set muscular fellow coming out of the house on the north of the common, with both arms raised above his head holding a roll of

basket work, evidently of great weight, and somewhat larger than a barrel of flour. Almost immediately he began turning somersets,—throwing himself forward upon the basket-work, and turning himself heels up and over, and landing upon his feet again,—coming along the path like a great wheel. I had never seen anything like this ; and I was astonished.

“That is Smith,” said Cephias, “the Enon minister, taking his morning exercise. That hurdle which he holds in his hands is full of rice,—two hundred pounds of it. He had it imported from Japan, expressly for his use. He is, just now, boarding at Strutt’s. I believe that he is writing a book or something of that sort. He writes awhile, then rests himself by coming out here and whirling over with his hurdle of rice a few times ; then goes back to his work again. Let’s speak to him.”

By this time Smith was seated cross-legged upon his two hundred pound weight, in the center of the little park. As we approached, I was much struck by his appearance ; and my first impressions were confirmed by our subsequent conversation, and by what Cephias afterwards told me about him. He is one of the most genial of men with life like a sunbeam ; of fine tastes, a literary judgment excelled by few, a keen wit, ready sympathies, with a warm hand, unselfish as if living wholly for others. This obscure man, Smith of Enon, was, at that time, a thorough and painstaking student, of considerable solid learning, with an indomitable spirit of application,—a man who would some day make his

mark in the world. This man had buried himself — as I should have expressed it — for years, in a town without fame ; preaching to a handful of people, doing the pastoral work, and studying six or eight hours a day. The wide and varied culture, and wholesome habits, gained in that pastorate, are bearing good fruit to-day. Those who now honor him, little know of his hard toil in those early years of obscurity.

It was this man, who was ready to take up the battle axe upon Cephas' side, in our discussion that morning. Cephas had argued that it was best to keep the Old Red Trunk for some years upon a wheelbarrow, so that it could be easily trundled from one town to another ; but I suggested some important parish, and a fixed position.

"Some of your sermons," I had said, "are as good as anybody's ; and you ought to have a big parish and big pay."

But he declared that small obscure parishes are the good places, since they are so peculiarly favorable for study.

I had asserted that a man would run down, if he were not drawn upon by the demands of position :—

"Young men at school in a class stimulate each other. But when as pastors they enter rural parishes, and find that they have more culture and power than the men they daily meet, they are apt to grow slack and conform to the town standard, and do not try hard to rise far above it day by day."

"If I would," answered Cephas, "I could tell you

just how to hinder it. I suppose the company of God ought to be sufficient stimulus."

"Life is nothing," I said, little heeding his last remark, "unless one is always ascending. I cannot be content without what one has called,—‘an extraordinary lifting of the feet in the rough ways of honor over the impediments of fortune.’ Is it not honorable to desire preferment in one’s work? My ambition, which seems to me proper and praiseworthy, will never let me be quiet. The trophies of Miltiades will not allow me to slumber. I must push on through all obstacles."

"Well, sir," said Cephas,—“to speak frankly,—if you want to make the most of yourself, I advise you to quit buttonholing all your friends to get them to introduce you to some ‘larger sphere;’ and go to work hard just where you are, to enlarge the sphere you are in: by pushing round some, you can do it. Just spend half the zeal you give to getting out of your parish into a bigger one, in widening and deepening your parochial work, and enlarging your mind, and doing a bigger business in your study, and you will rise fast enough in real power. What we want is not position, but power."

It was at this stage of the discussion, that,—as I have related,—we were interrupted by the incoming of the athletic Smith. When we had passed the civilities of the morning with this pastor from Enon, and had made him acquainted with the debate between us, he rose to his feet, and,—first raising his hurdle of rice over his head, and upholding it by his strong arms,—said:—

“There is nothing to hinder setting up one of the greatest factories in the world in any bushy and brambly town, if there is only capital enough to build it, and power enough to run it; so, one of the greatest thinking mills on the globe can be set up almost anywhere,—bringing an unheard of village into the very forefront of the intellectual forces of this planet,—if the capital and the power are equal to it.”

“It is not impossible,” he added,—placing his rice on the ground and standing upon it,—“for some very humble man, in an out of the way town, to rise up and become the first of a line of kings; founding a new empire in the literary and religious world. An active thinker may study for the world, as well as for his parish. There are men who have brought to the race blessings new, fresh from heaven. Of one you can say that he brought into the world a new element of civilization, or unfolded for the first time some important truth. It is possible to do this kind of business in a very small town, and make memorable a community that has been without note.

“I once saw a white headed eagle rise from a dead tree in a most desolate country, and ascend out of sight by circular sweeps without apparently moving wing or tail. So we may go into the wildest and roughest of our New England towns, and there lead lives that shall be always ascending; and we may do it with no undignified fluttering or passionate fanning of the air, but with calmness and dignity and such ease that it shall seem to be our natural motion.

"Said that noble woman Fidelia Fiske,—'It is how we live more than where we live.' 'How can a man be concealed? How can a man be concealed?' cried Confucius. A small parish cannot hide a man. 'Wherever ships sail or chariots run; wherever the heavens overshadow and the earth sustains; wherever the sun and moon shine, or frosts and dews fall, among all who have blood and breath, there is not one who does not honor and love him:' so says the Chinese classic on the honor of the true sage."

At this point our eccentric friend turned to Cephas, and asked him to bring the rice over to his boarding house. And then he threw himself down upon his right hand and over upon his left, and then upon his left foot and then upon his right, turning over and over, wheeling himself in this manner out of the park. We tried to move the rice but soon found it too much work.

"There is only one thing about Smith that I don't like," said Cephas. "He was something of a traveler in his boyhood; and when he gets upon his adventures in foreign parts, you can't always tell what to believe. When he first told me about the Japanese athletes turning somersets holding in their hands hurdles of rice weighing two hundred pounds, I doubted it: and he sent to Japan for this specimen, on purpose to show me that it can be done. Aside from this, I have no objections to Smith."

As we turned homeward, Cephas told me about the hard studying the Enon parsonage had witnessed.

And he did not fail to make a personal application of the morning's talk to me.—

“Your success, Edward, is in your own hand, in your own study. It avails not for you to seek this and that high place. Some one may object to your removal to this or that station; but no one can object to your being a man where you are. There is no objection to your being a man.”

So he spoke to me like my own better nature, and tried to awaken in me the purpose to rise above myself: for—to speak frankly—I had been a seeker for some “better place” ever since I had been in the ministry.

“I have been aching, for months, to have a talk with you,” added my mentor,—and I may as well report his words faithfully. “You have, many times, complained to me that your's was only a common career. Now what you want is to turn to, and make that common career illustrious. By an uncommon spirit it can be done. When Jonathan Edwards was turned out of Northampton, he went on a mission to Stockbridge. And he is remembered by the work he did in that little arched alcove between the chimney and the corner, with Indian children about his door; and not because he was afterwards president of a college. Dr. Emons, poor and in debt, did not hook himself to his influential friends, or go about candidating; but he put a hook on his study door, and did not let anybody disturb him, till he became a theological seminary, and had to let in students.

“If you want to rise in the world, rise in your parish.

Rise above yourself daily. Forget the things that are behind; and every morning awaken within a new man far nobler than he who lay down last night. You are to be a man in obscurity, or you will never be a man in the light. Can you easily hide the sun? Do not try to climb the heavens, and occupy a prominent place; but first of all make your soul luminous, and then the planets will circle around you. Brougham was a lawyer without name one day; the next day, by the decision of a legal point in his favor, he was the great advocate, and one of the foremost men in England; but he was as much of a man before that bright day as after, only the world did not know it.”—

—We were just entering his study door, when Cephas said,—“These walls are my witness, that, whether or not I ever found a college, I am bound, at the least, to educate myself. And I am not without hope that as the days go by, I may become a worthy Professor of Religion in my parish.”

It will be suitable to add, for the benefit of any reader who is disposed to be critical, that after we were fairly seated in Cephas’ study, my companion gave me Dante to read, and that I opened to the account the poet gives of the man whom he met carrying his head in his hand, holding it by the hair as one would a lantern.

“But I remained to look upon the crowd;
And saw a thing which I should be afraid,
Without some further proof, even to recount,

If it were not that conscience re-assures me.

* * * * *

I truly saw, and still I seem to see it,
A trunk without a head walk in like manner
As walked the others of the mournful herd.
And by the hair it held the head dissevered,
Hung from the hand in fashion of a lantern,
And that upon us gazed and said: 'O me!'"

"'O me!'" said I, closing the book, "this story appears to me somewhat improbable. It is very much easier to believe what my own eyes have seen to-day than to vouch for the veracity of this Italian wanderer in Malebolge."

And I assure the reader that I should not have mentioned this account of the athletic feats of Smith had not my conscience commanded me to do it.

X.

STONE COVE.

THE next settlement into which Cephas trundled his Red Trunk was Stone Cove, near my own home. I give below his own account of his experiences there upon the first morning after his arrival.

“On waking at five o’clock, I heard what I supposed was the welcome sound of my landlady’s coffee-mill; but it run on so long that I thought she must have an unusually big grist of coffee. I discovered, at last, that the noise I heard was only the Atlantic Ocean, across the street ten rods off, carrying coffee somewhere on its wide waves, and gently growling about it. The sea sounds like a wild wind in the forests, or like a tornado harping over granite ridges; but very frequently it tones down into the coffee-mill tone. Being fairly waked up by the running of (Cape) Anne’s* coffee-

* Prince Charles, son of Anne of Denmark, knew how to spell his mother’s name; and when he gave her name to the Cape, the fishermen ought to have learned to spell; but they did not, and most of them left off the *e*. It should be written as the Queen wrote it, *and as it appears in Smith’s Narrative, which is the first document naming it*. It is well known by those familiar with our

mill, I set out for Dove Hill before breakfast. The name and tradition of this land bird is still kept up on the Cape, in spite of the noisy protests of the sea fowl always sailing over it. High up the slope, I came suddenly upon half an acre of fish heads—cod-fish heads just above ground. Green as I was about this staple commodity, I made no doubt the hill was full, a living fountain of fresh fish ready to leap out on the green sward, to be salted and dried for the Western market. The view inland from this hill-top extends six miles or more over rough rocks and wild woodland to Mount Anne.

Three sides of the horizon show the sea. On the southeast is a port with vast stone breakwaters; and rising at the tip of the Cape two tall light-houses, standing alone on a long island. These are Queen Anne's Needles. South, across the roughest pastures and stone quarries, appears Massachusetts Bay. On the north, Ipswich Bay and twenty miles or more of

old records that it was a mere matter of luck as to spelling. Cape *Codd* appears upon a map of 1634, as reproduced in Palfrey's History of New England. Cape Codd and Cape Ann match. The sentence in which Cape "Ann" is first mentioned in the Mass. Bay Records, contains five mistakes in spelling. *Vide* vol. I p 253. Page 256 gives Anne. The prevailing mode dropped the *e*. Cape Ann is named for some unknown Betsey Ann or Sally Ann; but Cape Anne bears the name of an English Queen. There was no royal woman who wrote her name—Ann. Ann Hutchinson dropped the *e*, and the colony dropped her. I shall persist in adding the *e* to our Cape, in accordance with its first naming. There is a decided smell of fish about Cape *Ann*.

glistening sand,—dreary beaches short and long, and the white line of Plum Island and Salisbury. Sixty miles to the north rises blue Agamenticus in old York. All along this northern coast, the highlands back are crowned with villages and church spires. And on this side Ipswich Bay, I see the spire of a church, seemingly floating at sea, the hull being hidden by the intervening forest. Seaward are ships, some sailing towards the Dipper. All the water this morning is covered with white caps, Queen Anne's sheep roaming over the salt pastures.

“Here is this big, round hill, with green fields, yellow corn, blushing fruit, lowing cattle, and a wide outlook ; a fine upland farm, a richly cultivated country, thrust up into the air, like one of the broad-backed hills of Vermont, jutting far out into the sea,—a hill fit for the plow, amid the desolation of Cape Anne, where

All is rock at random thrown,
Black rock, bare crags, and banks of stone.

“One of the most noticeable features of this hill is the forest of derricks, which in one quarter rises in place of the forest primeval. Half a mile square of granite ledge has been honey-combed by the quarry men. Having descended the hill, we pass stout little stone wagons with heavy loads, slowly moving from the ledges towards immense piles of stone, which are pushed out into the sea to shelter the stone schooners. Here are three heavy laden vessels wall'd in close to

the post office ; and their decks of stone look little likely to float at sea. Not far away is a stone house, strong and secure as a jail. And here are the barns where the stone cattle are kept. These cattle that work on the ledges are really of stone, making beef with granite gristle—suited to these men of iron jaw. The barns have to be made, as I suppose, unusually strong for these muscular beasts. The underpinning is often run half way to the eaves, or again to the ridge pole. The stable windows reveal thick stone walls, as if they were the port-holes of fortresses. There are, reaching half across the doors outside, iron hinges, twisted like snakes among rocks. The date of the raising of the barn is sometimes deeply cut over the front door. Probably these buildings will stand as long as the Egyptian temples ; and in these Cape Anne temples reside the oxen, venerable and tough as Apis. Enormous eggs of the sea serpent, taken from some “cobble-stone beach,” have been thrown into the sides of one of these barns, as the British threw a cannon ball into the walls of old Brattle Street Church, and left it sticking half way out. This man, whose boys toss about these little granite balls like pebbles, has a flat stone six feet square projecting over one corner of his pig pen for the fragment of a roof. I saw pig pens, and little gardens two rods square, so heavily walled with stone that they seemed like parts of fortifications. One stone house has a garden wall of quarried stone ten feet high and forty feet long. The apple-trees in some of these gardens are anchored to keep them from

blowing off, roots and all, in a storm. I saw one tree with nine anchors in her, eighteen-inch fluke. Over one garden gate rose the jaw-bone of a whale, standing like a harrow to arch the path; and the rib of the same whale serves for a beam in a cow shed.

“One of these Cape Anne giants had, on some wet day, chopped out a chair and a settee of granite, and I saw them in his front yard. Not far away, I found a big ring cut an inch deep into a wide flat rock, as if some giant’s wife going by, had there set down her wash tub to rest. When I returned to my lodging, my landlord was splitting wood on a huge stone chopping block in his back yard, the axe going through to the stone every time. He remarked that he liked it, the block was so solid. The axe bore a dull testimony to some months of hammering stone. These stone men of Stone Cove are worthy representatives of the stone age of the world, and there are giants in these days. Are not the Anakims and Zamzummins still among us?

“All this I discovered before breakfast. My appetite was by this time very decided in its demands. Jaw and tooth were ready to take hold of all ordinary provender, like sledge and drill on granite. I was ready for a steak of stone. But my landlady placed upon the table that luscious chocolate-colored mess which—plus pods—tempted Esau,—though the Yankee woman had the beans baked, not stewed. I had a hard battle to get my share from the old salt who presided at the head of the table. He said, however, that he never liked beans much, but most of his neighbors

were very fond of them. When he was a cabin boy, sailing the Indian seas under a British flag, a signal of distress was seen one morning, and they bore down to relieve the stranger. She proved to be from Stone Cove. And her captain was, by reckoning, more than ten thousand miles from home, with only half a barrel of beans, and he never could bring his ship to port on that. My host remarked that the folk this way make no use of the esculent compared with the people up the Cape, who on great occasions, such as ordinations, are obliged to use Wenham Lake for putting their beans to soak before cooking."

The parson does not relate his adventures upon the first Sunday in his new parish; and I may as well tell it for him. He needed out door exercise to fit him for preaching. He also loved to study his sermons in some forest, and pull illustrations fresh from the branches they grew on. It was nine o'clock upon this Sunday when he took to the woods. The path was one of the most charming I ever trod. Instead of turning when the path grew beautifully less and wound up a tree, he struck into a shrub-covered valley, then entered upon rising ground and soon upon new hills. At ten o'clock he was thoroughly out of reckoning and had to take his tall hat up a tree to find out where he was.

Lost, and in the top of an oak, two miles or more from his meeting-house half an hour before service time! Little did his people know of the Wild Man side of their minister. He was in the pulpit promptly,

and the good deacons said it was a day of quickening, as if the Spirit of the Lord wrought through their new minister. His aspiring and perspiring in that tall tree did him good.

Cephas felt it to be one of the first duties he owed to himself, as soon as he was fixed in Stone Cove to unfix himself: to begin at the head of Plum Island, and coast round to Nahant, with walking stick for mast and sole leather for ship-timber. He always walked up the wind; so as to get the fresh life of the sea, when breaking waves weighted the atmosphere with their subtle tonic.

"Some days," said Cephas, "I envy the Wandering Jew; and wish I could take a few hundred years to follow the coast line of all the world. I'd do it for my first regular walk; and take a thousand years for it."

In the summer season, Cephas slept many nights in what he called the "Massachusetts General Hospital." That is, in the health-giving "Coast Range" of Massachusetts. Beginning with isolated peaks in the northern part of Essex county, there are regular Rocky Mountains in miniature, extending to the neighborhood of Boston, and rising for once on the south in the Blue Hills. This range is so well wooded on its flanks that Cephas once walked from Newbury Oldtown to Melrose in the woods, except when crossing roadways.

The Stone Cove minister made himself at home, all over Cape Anne; he knew every hill, ledge and boulder, every forest road, path, pathless wild, or rugged pasture, between Pigeon Hill in Rockport and Witch

Hill in Salem. Every inch of the shore was his ; and every creek, rill, and swampland knew his step.

"I need," said this Stone Cove minister, "to cultivate the wild beast within me, at least a day or two every week."

I once noticed a section of the backbone of a whale lying under Cephas' study table for a cricket. My eye fixed upon certain characters, which were never placed there by the original whale :—III : HXPI : LX : KW.

"What is that whale talking about?" I asked.

"He is a life insurance agent ; represents the Atlantic ; wants to know how long I expect to live," replied Cephas.

"And what do you tell him?"

"I propose to live till I am sixty years old. I can do it, if I have backbone enough. I have, therefore, spliced my purpose with this vertebra of a whale."

The great projects for which he lived, acted like clock weights, compelling Cephas to regular system in the business of keeping well. His physical condition demanded constant care in using the natural means of health, if he would carry out his life plans.

"In order to succeed in this," was the motto I saw pasted in the top of the Red Trunk, "live one day at a time : keep perfectly well to-day ; study what you can to-day ; do to-day's duties, and do no more." And another motto was borne on the inside Cephas' hat :—"The grand secret of keeping well is found in actually keeping well every day : doing work enough and play enough each day." It was on this account, that he kept the wild beast within him in good condition.

XI.

THE SHAGBARK.

CEPHAS' wanderings were, however, never aimless, the mere wandering of a wild creature in the outskirts of towns. Was it not said that Hercules after his greatest labors, retired into deserts that he might reflect upon his divine origin and renew his vigor?

I have a very unwieldy and awkward looking Shagbark cane now standing in the corner of my study. It belonged to Cephas. I could never use it much on account of its weight. It is marked with strange devices ; but I never knew their meaning. It was never kept among the armful of old sticks of all shapes and lengths and sizes which under the name of canes usually adorned one corner of Cephas' study. He did not take it when I walked with him ; but had it some days while he was at Stone Cove, when I unexpectedly found him in my forest range at Manchester, or when he was on "a regular tramp" as he called it. When I met him on such days he was very apt to slip my company. Having once, however, caught a glimpse of the cabalistic characters on the Shagbark, I concluded

there was something unique about it ; and I came at last to associate that in my mind with certain days when his conduct or appearance was a little more unaccountable than usual. There was a secret here, concerning which I was not at liberty to ask.

In some of these Shagbark days, as I called them, I noticed in him not only an unusual but an astonishing mental vigor and buoyancy of spirit ; and I knew not but a good *dæmon*, like that which often spoke to Socrates, had possession of my friend. When I said anything which would have given him an opportunity to speak of this mystery, he was reserved ; and I saw there was a something between him and me, as indeed there had been when we were children together. What I know about this I found out in little snatches of conversation, but mainly by my acquaintance with Cephas' papers since his death.

How he came to cut the Shagbark is related in one of the rough notes I have found in his pigeon-holes. It appears to have been written in Nuntundale early in his ministry.

"One afternoon," says the manuscript, "I went down to a promontory jutting into the sea ; and there at about nightfall climbed a shagbark upon the very peak of the hill. This wild pasture rises in a gentle green slope from the harbor on the one side, and in high cliffs steep from the sea on the other. A valley of sand ploughs into one portion of it ; and acre upon acre of out-cropping ledge mars the greater part of its surface. A few apple-trees, which have blossomed for several

generations still bear fruit. Cedar, oak, bayberry, barberry and huckleberry find root in this soil. From my high perch I could overlook a wide district of rocky hill and forest, river fresh and river salt, islands and beaches, villages and villas, spires and masts and lighthouse towers rising from city and sea. The western woods were glowing with the last rays of daylight, and darkness was settling upon the town. Occasional white waves were rising under the stiffening breeze upon the near sea, which was still light-bearing like a mirror with mottled surface ; and night was fast shutting down upon the more distant deep.

“ But I little heeded these surroundings, only as they aided me in the process of coming to myself again. I had not, for a long time, been quite myself. Spiritual purposes, feelings and habits were awry ; the intellect was becoming more and more dormant and unreliable ; and my physical condition was bad. Sitting almost motionless for an hour or two, save when disturbed by the violence of spiritual agony or wrestling, I held in my hand the Words of Jesus, and plead with Him to fulfil His promises for my own upbuilding in an efficient life. And there I settled it just what the matter was and what was the remedy,—the faithful adherence to a certain habit long useful to me as a fountain of spiritual force and comfort, but not infrequently neglected. And I cut from that tree a Shagbark cane to carry with me henceforth in my new pilgrimage.”

This “ certain habit ” had some hold on him when he was a child. As I walked beside him the day we re-

turned from our nutting expedition, when I went to sleep on his bag of walnuts, I did not understand the secret place in which he nourished the phantoms whose faces he showed me. As we cracked our jokes, or ran, wild as two colts in the bracing air and bright sun, or climbed the tallest trees to gather the few fair leaves yet flying on high, I did not know what I now know, that in all those days of boyhood, he was in winter evenings often in the secret places of evergreen woods, or sheltered nooks of the stone quarries, conversing with a Friend more dear to him than I was : and that he often spent half the night in his chamber, or a whole summer's day in the groves or by the side of a brook or on the height of a hill, studying the divine Word and gaining moral power by communion with the Source of all Light and Love.

And this "certain habit" was developed more or less in his school days. But it was not till a twelve-month before entering on his professional work that this course of life was strongly fixed upon him. Then the Lord began to open his eyes ; and to him who sat in darkness appeared the heavenly light. The Lord smote his eyes ; and it was to him the way of power. His spiritual vision was made clear by it. Henceforth he had less need of the sun by day or the moon by night : the Lord became to him the Everlasting Light. Fearing blindness, he went out of library doors ; bidding farewell to the range of reading he had planned. Henceforth he was to commune with God, not man, and to seek inspiration from heaven ; and he needed no

one's pity. He was led in a way he knew not. All one autumn and winter he was compelled to walk during the long evenings; and those miles of plank sidewalk were to him like heaven's golden pavement. He had to go without human company, for no friend would trudge with him in the cold and darkness and storm, hour after hour and night after night: he therefore sought celestial Companionship. He came at last to believe the divine message, take God at his word, and converse with the Infinite Spirit whose presence had been often unrecognized.

As the months rolled on, in experimenting on the care of his eyes, he found he could get little use of them in the morning hours; he therefore shifted his time for walking, and stuck to his new Companion. It became more and more apparent that he could not use his eyes at all, except by an uncompromising system of exercise and walking in the morning. And his spiritual communion in these hours was so precious to him that the rigid habit was at last his; and it became like iron, holding him in firm grasp. I find many endorsements among his papers, in which the loss of eyesight in school days was set down as worth more to him than all the rest of his discipline. An extra course of partial blindness, he believed the best thing that could overtake any candidate for the ministry; but he never made me believe this.

"I think," says one bit of paper I have found in the Old Red Trunk, "that about all the good I have gained in the world has come by my solitary walks, which have

been made necessary by my eyes. I must walk, or I cannot read. I must read, therefore I walk; and as I must go alone, I seek to be not alone, and the Father is with me."

To live three or four hours out of doors during each twenty-four, was found by experiment to be needful to keep his body in condition to be used as a basis for intellectual and social activity; and he came to count this as an advantage. So in every way, "a certain habit" gained a controlling power over him. And when he cut that Shagbark stick, it was not the beginning of days to him, but a stout confirmation and new settling of that which had long held sway over him.

This habit was greatly quickened by the experiences of the Phantom House. And I believe that he kept much in the company of the Heavenly Bridegroom after that.

I find from my friend's papers, that he dreamed often of the Frigate Bird; and the wild life it leads is in some respects an emblem of his own. My acquaintance with ornithology is so limited that I do not know much about this strange dweller in the heights above. I am ashamed to say that the only account of it I ever read, is in one of the notes I find among Cephas' papers. I have heard him say that on sea voyages he had more than once seen this bird. But some old ship-masters I have conversed with never saw it; or had seen it so far off as not to recognize this description.

"*Tachypetis Aquila*. The man-of-war bird, or frigate

bird, lives in the sky over the seas, and stoops to the water or the shore only for food or at the breeding season, never for rest. Its body is hardly so large as that of a domestic cock ; but its glossy wings are fifteen feet span, and the tail is in proportion. Divested of the accessories to flight, the body is so light that it is easily suspended in the air. The feet are very short ; and it is so impeded in land movement by length of tail and wing, that it is possible sometimes to kill one with clubs at the breeding time. The bird is a robber, a man-of-war, a pirate, living upon what it steals by attacks on fishing birds. This frigate of the air is sometimes seen by sailors amid the tropics at noonday, sailing in circles high over the masthead ; and again it is seen in the night far north, amid the fires of the aurora, as if moving upon still wings through swift shooting flames. Week after week, and year after year, it lives in the air. It sleeps on expanded wings, perhaps five thousand feet above the sea ; floating like a cloud from continent to continent. Its flight is five or six times as swift as the railway trains, eighty leagues an hour. This bird finds perpetual light of sun or moon or stars : for when winds begin to rock this man-of-war, and the storm is wild, there is always a calm space far above, where the bird may sleep, or ply its wings in security."

So, by the shores of the sea Cephas was longing for the most elevated kind of life possible to him ; as if always dwelling on high. To him the upper air had unspeakable charms. It was his early aim to obtain

the highest wisdom in laying out his life-work, and the greatest degree of power possible for completing that work. If he had high aims in life, he chose also the best means of success. He supposed that the highest achievements possible to man could be wrought only by help of the Holy One. To test the problem of obtaining power in prayer was, therefore, his purpose quite early in life.

He took the words of the Old Record, believing that the experiences of Moses, and Samuel, and Elijah, and Daniel were put into it for instruction. He tried hard to learn the lesson, and thought to do it by the Bible method,—taking time enough. To give this matter thorough trial was the best use he could think of, for the choicest hours of weeks together. He would know what the Bible men knew, or know that there was nothing in it. If in ancient days the prophets of God spent much time in wandering alone with Him, crying to Him for the help they needed, for quickening revelations and words and powers from Him, he was inclined to experiment in the same line; and this in no expectation of becoming a revealer of bibles to men, but with the clear and fixed hope that the Holy One would awaken all his nature and develop every faculty.

And if, besides intellectual and spiritual growth, he could become mighty to walk and to run, to be strong physically, he chose this walking with God in solitary places as the best use to which he could put many hours every week. This, then, was the real meaning of the Shagbark, so far as I now know it. It was his

purpose, I suppose, so long as the tough wood might wear, to bear it forth on daily journeyings, as he sought with some literalness to walk with the Lord.

“He who has learned to prevail in prayer,” Cephas wrote, “stands upon the grandest heights of the world. The closet is the place of honor: the closet is the place of power. How poor and mean life seems if it be bereft of those hours in which the Spirit strives within, with inexpressible anguish and groanings that cannot be uttered.”

And I have found, pinned to the bit of paper upon which this note was written, another which he had compiled from the Vishnu Purana. This clearly indicates, that in his mind the Christian precept and the Pagan example are not far apart:—

“I have read that the ascetic prince Dhruva, as a boy of five years old, was absorbed in the contemplation of Vishnu; and the divinity so filled his soul that the earth could no longer bear his weight. ‘As he stood upon his left foot,’ says the story, ‘one hemisphere bent beneath him; and, when he stood upon his right, the other half of the earth sank down.’ Then the mother of the prince tried to divert him from his prayers; and she besought him with tears, but he heeded them not. Fierce tempters by day, with fiery countenances and terrible arms, availed not. Fiends by night, whirling threatening weapons, could not make him cease from his devotions. Goblins and monsters with roar and yell were unheard. The child was engrossed with only one idea, and saw only Vishnu’s presence in his soul.

“So he incessantly advanced towards superhuman power by his devotions. And as the jealous gods besought Vishnu to allay the fervor of his meditations, the supreme power answered, ‘The lad desireth neither the rank of Indra, nor the solar orb, nor the sovereignty of wealth or of the ocean. All that he solicits I will grant.’ Then when Hari said to the boy, ‘Demand what boon thou desirest,’ the child answered, ‘If the Lord is contented with my devotions, let this be my reward,—that I may know how to praise him as I wish. * * My heart is overflowing with devotion to thee. O Lord, grant me the faculty worthily to lay mine adorations at thy feet.’

“What though the sequel of this wonderful story is full of the strangely grotesque imaginations of the Hindu mythology? This part is a lesson for me. If by spending my hours in prayer and praise I could gain the highest reward, should I not choose to have bestowed upon me new power in self-devotement to the Lord of all?”

XII.

COLD SPRING MEADOW.

THE foot paths about Manchester open the most delightful walks. They measure far more miles than the public roads. Residing in the parsonage, whenever I was in a hurry to get into the wild, I climbed over my back fence, and in a moment entered the lane back of the old Murray house; then took the foot path which leads past the old mill, where I crossed the stile into the Cold Spring Meadow.

I was sitting on this stile, one morning, reading about an ancient Arabian poet before the time of Mohammed. Kutayir was asked, "how he managed when poetry became difficult to him." He answered,—“I walk through the deserted habitations, and through the blooming greenswards; then the most perfect songs become easy, and the beautiful ones flow naturally.” So too, the prophet of Allah pointed to the poets of his own day, saying,—“Seest thou not how they rove, as bereft of their senses, through every valley?” Then I called to mind the words of St. Bernard, when he taught that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that the inner life is to be developed by

daily meditations. "Thou wilt," said he, "find more in forests than in books. Woods and stones will teach thee what thou canst not learn from the masters."

Stepping down from the stile I picked up a white beach pebble, upon which was written in a familiar hand:—

. . . . "tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
sermons in stones."

I concluded, from this token, that my friend Cephas must have left his pastoral care at Stone Cove to study in my neighborhood. But I knew him well enough, to guess that he would foot it over half the woods and wild pastures in town, before pulling my door bell.

I was, therefore, little surprised to find him a few rods farther on, lying down by the side of the Cold Spring; which was bubbling up from the sands under a turf bank, clear and sparkling as in the days when the first settlers of the town named this pre-eminently the "Cold" Spring. He was, as usual, writing on sundry bits of paper, and reading over what he had written. I heard these words:—

"Could the interior life of the most ordinary mind be photographed, or fully and truly written out, it would be more wonderful than any book of foreign travel, or any history of kingdoms and battles, or any biography yet written. To observe one's own mental operations, and to note the common experiences of the soul,—this is a path too little frequented, a foot track to self knowledge."

"Cephas, Cephas, ho!" I cried.

He sprang to his feet, as though he heard the whizzing of an Indian arrow, and faced about.

"Just the man I want. I was trending your way this morning. Went to the stile and turned back for an hour."

It required, however, no hard work to persuade him to go into the woods again for a long walk,—as I had a horrible fit of indigestion, which I was compelled to be rid of before Sunday.

"Health!" answered Cephas. "I don't walk for my health! I have run in the woods till I love it. I begin to long to be a savage and go wild."

"Begin to be a savage?" I asked. "I thought you began years ago, and that nowadays you run rather to become civilized by trying to study. I find fragments of your sermons all over the Cape. Your sermons impress the very stones. Put that in your sling next Sunday," I added, handing over the beach stone with the Shakesperian lines on it.

"I have been thinking," said my companion as we crossed a little stream in the path, "about this business of studying so like fury every day. My ideas do not amount to much, when I am trying hard to 'think' as I call it. All my best thoughts come unasked when I am roaming abroad in a mood to receive ideas impressed on my mind without seeking for them. Perhaps I can't make you understand just what I mean; but I feel very decidedly that the healthiest kind of thinking is that which a man of physical vigor, good

sense and cultivated mind gets in his hours of apparent idling. The wild birds do not bring forth young every day; they fly through the forests, over gardens and grain fields, over the margins of the sea, or over mountain ranges, and gather vigorous life a great part of the year. But there are many of us who do not imitate the wild birds; we are like domestic fowl laying common sort of eggs diligently every day, which may at any time with short notice be brooded over and hatched by wide-mouthed quacks, or even by machinery."

Approaching now the little cluster of pines whose needles so thickly strew the ground on the left of the path before crossing the wall into the orchard, I turned my eyes toward the inviting covert and saw upon the ground a pocket Bible, and sundry sheets of paper. The book was a new one.

"If that was your Bible," said I to my comrade, "I should say that this paper must be another division of your sermon."

Picking up the book, I found, on the fly, these words,—“My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times.” Taking a sheet of the paper, I found it scratched all over with a singular compound of Maxdecroix and original short hand characters and long English.

Slowly I made my way through the opening sentences:—“I live in a perpetual morning, as if I was always circling the earth with the day dawn. I silence the din of the world, that I may be for some hours alone with God. This gives me vigor for the remainder of the

day,—as if the elasticity, freshness and strength of the day dawn were maintained till after sunset. The most intense living comes through kindling the soul in solitudes, setting it all on fire every morning. We let the flames go down at night, cover the embers, and sleep; but morning by morning we must renew the heat from heaven. I take to myself the motto of Pythagoras,—‘In the morning solitude.’”

Stowing Book and papers into one of his big book-pockets, Cephas proposed that we step over the wall, and club certain sour apple trees. Our mouths were soon turned into cider mills. We craunched the juicy fruit in crossing Pople Plain; and then took a pleasant path winding about a hill side, which was adorned with brilliant shrubs and scattered trees in high color, mingled here and there with dark evergreens. Just before coming on Wild Cat brook, the path turned to the right, threading a thicket of young pines; and then we brushed along the yellow leaves of beeches, which were trying hard to hide the narrow footway. Bearing to the left, we made the crossing of the brook in a valley long desolated by the axe, now growing to be a vale of beauty by a surprising variety of young timber; glowing that day with bright tints, as if an army with a thousand banners were flying their colors in the sun.

“Thank God that so much of the earth is left wild for man to go pasturing in,” said my comrade as we looked up the valley.

After gazing for a moment at the abrupt hill on the left, and the wooded crest on the right, we moved along

an old wood road under the great beech ; whose interlocked arms invite the repose of every passer by,—as if the very trees of Manchester were vying with the townsmen in the cabinet business. In a moment more we came upon the saw mill, which is to this part of the Essex Woods the grand starting point for all manner of pleasant adventures. There is no work going on for so large a part of the year that every loiterer may occupy it as his own for the hour, as much as if its wheel would never move again.

Crossing the dam, we were in a little while among giant pines ; whose extraordinary height still shows something of the dignity of the forest primeval. The solitude of these cloisters of the wilderness is rendered the more pleasing by the sweep of the vale ; now narrow and shut in by rugged hills, then wide spread with ample views and free rambling before one passes over a crest into another room of this forest temple. Without path we wandered at will, as if trying to lose ourselves in a part of the wood unfamiliar to me. Winding along the steep north side of a hill, where the dark damp butts of the trees never saw the sun, and where the white birch is blackened by continual moisture, we came to a height I had never climbed before. But my companion knew every step. Such were his habits on foot that after abiding for a time in any region, the view from any height was like looking at his own house ; every hill, grove, stream, sea beach or headland, had certain associations in his mind, as if he had lived all over the country,—and these different locations

were the chambers where he had slept, studied or prayed. And he could at anytime, anywhere, call up pictures of these wild rooms. The different sentences of his sermons were associated in his mind with these delightful studies all over the wildernesses of sea coast or mountain district.

As we sat here looking at the distant sea, wild rocky hills and wide range of forest about us, my companion pulled a letter out of his pocket from a friend on the border. The writer expressed his unbounded delight in doing his thinking where there was no one within fifteen hundred miles who would care what he thought. He had a sense of independence, to him refreshing.

"I do not expect," added Cephas, "to be really satisfied till I have an unpeopled planet, which I can alight on at will, for my study. But then I should want the fixing of it first. I could not stand flat prairies and treeless plains. All I should care anything about would be mountains, ravines, forests and the sea. My potatoes and wheat and beef 'critters' I should raise on some other planet."

"Do you remember," I asked, "what that sturdy New Hampshire pastor once told us on the beach?—'I would mind my business, and let the sea mind his business.'"

"Yes," replied Cephas, "but it is a part of my business to watch the sea; and I am neglecting my business if I don't do it. The sea is to me a perfect tonic physically, and a mental inspiration. My mind is like a tide mill, depending on the flow of the ocean for

doing its work. Inexhaustible energies come to me from the sea, every time I look on blue waves or scent salt."

Pursuing our pathless way again we did not leave our rambling till we found the Fern-faced Ledge, and stood under the sounding board of its cold pulpit, and looked into its pokerish pockets and uncounted crevices. Here frosts and rains pry off huge blocks of stone, which are carpeted by the falling foliage of the hemlock, and then with green brakes watered by secret springs; so that this shady nook is the very paradise of mosses and ferns.

Walking homeward together arm in arm upon the high road, Cephas and I still conversed about the secret of the highest intellectual life possible to man.

"I have had many, many days," said I, "in which I have been like a mule in a mill; but it is my wish to lead the life of an eagle eyeing the sun."

"Would it not be possible," asked Cephas, "for every man to double his intellectual force by keeping much in the company of Infinite wisdom?"

The relation which Cephas' lonely walks bore to his indoor studies appeared when we were fairly housed and had taken to our books.

"Did you ever think," asked my chum, "that prayer is needful in reading as much as in writing? One seizes a book and comes at the heart of it in an hour,—seizing the leading points, all seed-thoughts, and skipping pages of mere words,—when he has just been praying over it, and getting the mind ready to do its work well, and to do it quickly."

This accords not ill with what I know concerning the proportion of my friend's life. He was no mere wild-wood dreamer. As each day yielded hours for devotion, so each day of health found him at his books.

"When you pray," wrote Cephas, "you wonder that the Lord does not descend from the heavens with a shout. But go back to your study. The sun will rise tomorrow and pursue his journey as calmly as he will in the millennium. Christ prayed in the night; but he had wisdom by day. Unhasting, unresting, plead with God; and when you plead with man be sure you do it intelligently."

XIII.

JACK'S HILL.

MILLETT'S swamp is a perverse piece of ground, concerning which our Manchester people quarreled with their pastor Millett and he with them, nearly two hundred years ago. It has not been worth much since, except for a trap to catch ministers in,—as I personally know from miry experience.

I never did see a piece of swamp, but I wanted just to step from one tuft of turf to another, merely to see whether I could get over ; and if the turf was only a bit of grass and a little water and unmeasured depth of mud, it made no difference with my enjoyment of the splashing. My mother never could break me of going into mud puddles. When, therefore, I waded through the brushy briery and thorny chirography of our old town records, and found out that this whole town was in a muddle for some years about the minister's swamp, I heroically determined to go to the bottom of the subject. And I did. It is two feet and a half deep in that place which lies between Jack's Hill and Mother Crombie's hen house. The soil I brought out on my boots was mine, and just about my full share, according

to the vote of the ancient town meeting that this swamp be "for the use, benefit and encouragement of the ministry henceforth and forever." I took my share of "encouragement" when I pulled myself out of the depths by the friendly aid of an alder.

When, therefore, I lately found in Cephas' Old Red Trunk certain pieces of paper with marks indicating that he uttered substantially these words in hearing of the patient alders and fir trees in Millett's swamp, I was inwardly delighted. The ledge where he stood is sixty feet high, as abrupt as Spy Rock. Jack's Hill was for the time his pulpit.

Whether Cephas went to Jack's Hill through the swamp on that occasion, I do not know; that he went through the swamp on some day is morally certain. Most likely that evening he went by the old Essex road, and climbed up the steep back of this rocky head, which looks out boldly from the edge of the forest upon the dwellers in the town. The sentences which I will now transcribe, appear to have been written out at some leisure after the ideas had been first spoken extempore on this rocky pulpit, facing Millett's swamp, on a fine summer night. It was at the time when Cephas was living at Stone Cove.

These remarks were evidently addressed to an imaginary congregation of ministers standing up to their knees in the swamp and stretching out their arms in stiff gestures like so many dead trees. No creature was, however, present to listen except a screech-owl with eyes and ears wide open, whose stuffed form is

now mounted upon my mantel-piece and looking down upon me as I write his biography. He was caught and skinned by the Jack Hill preacher for hooting in sermon time. The off hand talk which the owl did not appreciate may, properly enough, be called

CONCIO AD CLERUM.

“Beloved hearers! Weary days will come in which you will take up the words of the prophet:—‘Oh, that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them.’ Now my advice to you is to take a stout stick and start.

“There is nothing more amusing than to lose yourself in the heart of some small forest, not more than a dozen miles in diameter. When all else fails this will give a new sensation. It is easy enough to do it, only walk carelessly and become so absorbed in abstruse thinking as, for the time, to lose the instinct of direction. You need to make many turns and observe no marks. In this way, whether the forest is new or familiar, you can soon involve yourself enough and have no correct knowledge of the points of compass. Then you will look on all things with strange and wondering eyes, even if the objects subsequently prove to be well known. Being reasonably certain of getting out without very distant walking, it is a good plan to stay lost nearly all day; and toward sundown make a bee line somewhere and get out.

"There is nothing uncomfortable about this. A level headed man, accustomed to wild life, with compass and matches and a bit of hard tack in his pocket, will never be uneasy or have any true sense of being himself lost. Paths, towns, villages, may be so lost that one has not the least notion of their whereabouts ; and when a man is tired of parochial care it is a very happy thing to have them stay lost till it is absolutely needful to hunt one up.

"Can you not imagine that it must be a perfect diversion from ordinary cares to be lost in a forest? When I am lost in the woods, I don't care a fig whether X, or Z, comes out ahead in a public quarrel. I only want to know which path to take to get somewhere, or whether I shall find any path leading anywhere except into a bottomless bog ; although I never found a bog in the woods, so deep and dirty as the miry mess some of my people love to wade into, when they stir things to the bottom in their attempts to throw mud at each other."

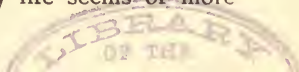
Cephas was not the minister to foot it up and down past the houses of his people and his meeting-house, nervously thinking about his health, and worrying about his parishioners ; he went out of sight and hearing of them all, and held sweet communion with heaven. He walked with the Lord, that he might better walk with men.

"Do you think," said the *concio ad clerum*, "that the demand in your parochial work is too great to allow whole days for prayer? A visit with God, before pastoral visiting, is the way to do good work. Win your

man at the throne of grace, before you go to the man. Take a hard case and carry it to God: leave the hardness of it with Him; and take away with you the case made easy. God will give you good sense, practical wisdom, tact, and grace to handle your man to your mind; or he will give you good sense and grace to bear it, if the man will not be moulded.

“And as to the amount of time to be taken for prayer, by all means take enough. Do not return from your forest path until you know that God has heard you, and that you will be satisfied with the answer whatever it is. It will be poor economy of time to go pottering about the parish, taking much time in bunglingly trying to do hard things, which might be skilfully done with ease in short space, if you would only go to God to know just how to do it, and not quit inquiring of Him till you find out.”

It was in Cephas' mind reckoned as one of the grand advantages of a small country parish, that it affords such choice opportunities for solitude and prayer by the hour together on quiet hills. And I have myself, sometimes, thought that this method of praying all over one's parish is very fit, if a man is so situated as to be able to do it. In a small compact community, a pastor will find his closets in solitudes all around it; and these solitudes may thus become, as it were, the defences of his church, as the mountains around Jerusalem. Common hills, consecrated by prayer and baptized with the tears of supplication, become parts of a Holy Land. And I am sure my life seems of more



worth to me, in these later days, since I have found out these hidden experiences of my friend.

But I cannot quit Jack's Hill until I first transcribe another paragraph found among Cephas' papers, the original of which relates to this granite knob.

"Go," says the manuscript, "to one of the most dreary ledges and lie upon your face. If your eyes are full of tears and you look through the tears into the poor thin rock moss, you will behold a glory singular as if heaven itself opened to you. There is an unsuspected depth to the moss, and its flakes are magnified. Its foliage seems firm and vast like evergreens on a mountain side. Little pebbles appear like great rough boulders. The coloring is wonderful, beyond anything ever seen in the common world. Minute patches of rock, having apparently little color, glow like celestial fires; the hues are intense; no precious stones in the crowns of kings have any such depth and watery richness; they are moist as if with the dews of heaven; they rival the dew drops. Seen through tears the rock is not dry; it is not common; it is not desolate; it is alive and growing like a garden of God. I have seen enchanting visions among common tree tops or in looking into the clouds, and strange beauty in the bottom of brooks or shallow ponds, a new world in the grass with dew upon it,—all these revealing the glory of God; but I find nothing like the bleak face of a ledge. Therefore it is that I prize these praying places far from towns; and I behold the Infinite Presence in things common. And my faith is immovable as the underlying granite."

XIV.

THE ENGLISH HELEN.

CEPHAS' work at Stone Cove was suddenly terminated by his seeing an advertisement in an English paper which led him over sea to search for his long-lost brother. Cephas had hoped against hope. The idea could not be given up that he should sometime see his own brother's face again among the living. He never ceased to inquire in divers ways, and read regular files of provincial and English papers. Perhaps it was some boys' talk they once had together, which led him to think his brother would make for England, if he could get there. Once I heard Cephas say that if he could look upon every face in London, he thought he should find his brother; though he acknowledged that this was a mere phantom of his,—the fact of his brother's death by the Indians being sufficiently well established to satisfy most minds.

The advertisement which led him to cross the Atlantic was mere gibberish; several letters of the alphabet combined in the most arbitrary way. But Cephas declared that it could be interpreted by a cipher which he and his brother had agreed upon, the

morning they started to run away. According to the key, which he still preserved, he had his brother's address in London.

His search in London led him, singularly enough, to the house of the person who inserted the advertisement. And he found, in a very old pocket-book on the premises, a key of the cipher like his own, in a very boyish handwriting. Cephas believed it had been copied from that of his brother. The owner of the pocket-book had just died,—having been unfortunately suffocated by a hempen collar. He had come to England from the provinces. Cephas found the family to which the young man belonged, in the north of England. The sisters said they remembered a little American lad once camping near their old home, with straggling Indians; so that Cephas finally settled on this as a confirmation of the Indian theory of his brother's death, and gave up the search.

Although Cephas did not find his brother, he did find the English Helen,—Nellie as he always called her. The letters, that came to me before his return, conveyed nearly all the information I could at that time gather concerning this woman. Cephas rarely alluded to her after he came back; and I did not feel free to question him. Only once did I venture. Soon after his return I asked,—

“What about the English Helen?”

The tears started in his eyes, and he said,—

“Do not speak to me of any one bearing that name. There is only one Helen.”

He had several letters from Nellie, and often wrote. If he happened to take one of her letters from the post when I was with him, he would voluntarily read me parts of it, as if from any other entertaining friend. Her letters were singularly sprightly, marked with great keenness of mind and good sense. This friendship was for the time like a new fountain of life to him ; filling in some measure the need which had sorely pressed upon him since the breaking up of his Island Home.

Some things concerning the English Helen, I may suitably relate ; indeed, it is needful that I do so, since by the curious turns which make life half comedy and half tragedy, her life was subsequently interwoven with that of Cephas in a somewhat singular manner.

Her father was an energetic business man ; but his line was not one to make him more manly, or to enlarge his sympathies. Thoroughly engrossed in making money, his success and decision led him to tolerate no opposition. So that, at last, he had fixed upon him the infirmity,—which so many of us plead guilty to,—of living mainly to have his own way. Helen's mother was a woman of unusual mental powers, well educated, of marked benevolence, and very positive religious life.

Unfortunately, the father had not fallen in with the wishes of his only child, in respect to her friendships. One, with whom she had been most intimately acquainted since childhood, and to whom she had been plighted since her early teens, had, a few years before Cephas met her, perished upon the great plains of

America ; having first escaped from the red men, whose refined tortures made him choose death by starvation in hopeless wandering. The horrible details of this event, coming through some mischance to Helen's knowledge, led her to the very verge of madness.

When Cephas met her, she was so far recovered, as to find diversion and some measure of new life in the acquaintance of the young American. At this time, the father was urging upon the daughter a match singularly distasteful to her, but desirable in the eyes of one who worshiped wealth.

Cephas, after leaving England, met mother and daughter upon the continent ; their acquaintance ripening into a warm friendship. His letters gave glowing accounts of Helen's charming qualities. Great strength of will and a naturally buoyant disposition were apparently bringing her up from the long continued ill health, which had clouded her recent years. Unassuming, unselfish, well proportioned in gifts and graces, thoroughly disciplined, of much native force of intellect, she seemed to Cephas an almost perfect woman. And she was so like her mother, that my friends' admiration was equally shared by the two ; the mother apparently little the older,—the ill health of the one and the youthfulness of the other having made them like companions.

When Cephas returned to America, he went to Rio and to New Orleans upon charitable errands devised by his new friends. After his return to my home on Cape Anne, Cephas remained some time with me ;

and then went to California, to engage in ministerial labor. But he was soon obliged to return; with health so impaired, that it was only after many months — half play and half work — in two or three seaboard parishes of Nuntundale, that he became fit for hard service again.

It was during his absence in California that an incident occurred, which excited me greatly at the time. The sensation can shock no reader as it did me. The contrast between its recital and the chapters which begin and which close this story, cannot be so great as the incongruity between this adventure and the sober, studious and devout life of Cephas.

The affair grew directly out of his recent trip to England. Searching for his brother, he became somewhat known to certain officers of justice; and for a time he was a loungeur about police courts in London. I do not know as I ought to say that his face was one to excite suspicion: it is certain that Helen did not think so. But his countenance was very easily changed; and some days, he wore shockingly bad clothes, to further the finding of his brother; besides, his Wild Man nature made him delight in strange company. Cephas told me that one day, not long before he left London for the continent, he heard in a coffee house that a warrant was out for his arrest for supposed complicity in a robbery. He gave, however, not the slightest credence to the report, and was quite amused by it. But just before he left me to go to California, he received word, from a name unknown to him in

England, that a certain man with whom he had been brought in contact in hunting up the hanged provincial, was actually in pursuit of him. Cephas placed little confidence in the communication; although he remembered having caused this gentleman's arrest, and his conviction for a crime. What came of it all, will be related in the next chapter.

XV.

THE ESSEX WOODS.

A FAVORITE drive for the lovers of Cape Anne scenery lies through this famous forest. The thick growth, rough boulders, high ledges, swamp lands, and brook, give a constant charm ; which is heightened by the varying colors of different seasons, the changing light of morning and evening, the shade at noon, or quiet hours under the high moon near midnight. Reaching out from this roadway are the paths of the woodcutter ; and if the pleasure seekers who roll along this hard way with fine carriages will tie up, strike off into the timber, and walk for a score of miles, as they easily may without seeing human face or crossing a high road, they will know that the woods as well as the sea conspire to make Manchester the most delightful resort upon the whole New England coast.

Half a mile above Baker's saw mill a rough hill rises from the edge of the wet and scraggly meadows of the brook. It may be readily reached in winter over the ice. In summer there are various paths from the public road. To me, the best of all is the old route, passing the mill and to the left of Shingle Place Hill.

It is to this Beaver Hill,—named for the old beaver-dam in the stream below it,—that I will invite the reader to walk with me on an autumnal morning.

Just before we get to the wall beyond the clearing, a fine echo may be awakened by speaking to the wood-covered hill across the pond. Civilly addressing the echo and bidding him good morning,—which is a cheering thing to do in a lonely place,—we creep through the bars like a sheep, or bound over the top like a deer—if we can imagine a deer touching the top rail with one forefoot. We then look about the wall on the right, to pick up one of the rattlesnake canes I always keep in store there; a cane with a forked foot having the prongs pointed, ready to pin a reptile to the earth if need be. Thus armed, we walk through the snake country. All this region abounding in broken ledges, minute caves, boulders piled up cobble stone fashion, and old trees which are stepping off their rocky foundations with roots half above ground as if walking away in search of soil into which to insert their toes,—this is the very paradise for snakes; and every straggling, black, brown or spotted root looks like one. But Hildreth of “Mount Zion” has cast the serpent out of this Eden.

If I have the story correctly, he gained his living one winter from a rattlesnake bank, drawing one whenever he was short of money and carrying it to the selectmen, who—upon his allowing it to dangle about their legs—paid the town bounty “at sight.” Rattle and fang had crept for winter quarters into the crevice of a

ledge; but Hildreth warmed up the front by a fire whenever he wanted one of them. As the heat penetrated the cave like a warm spring sun, one creeping thing—like Noah's adventurous dove—ventured forth to see what sort of footing the snake family was likely to find after the winter's nap; then the inhabitant of "Mount Zion" took the half-wakened prize in a slip-noose on the end of a pole, put his fire out and went to town. This process, kept up for some months, makes it now safe to walk in the woods. During all my wanderings I never heard a rattle except once by the roadside toward Gloucester,—though I have lunched and napped in the very headquarters of these pests, which popular imagination plants in every wide forest and on every pleasant hill. Old woodsmen tell me that they have rarely seen this dreaded reptile. Nevertheless, I always carry a forked stick; and have several of them out under my back stairs at this writing, which have traveled far without one victim.

I wish I could take every one of my friends by this path. There are upon it so many stone blocks for seats and for study tables, that I am frequently drawn into this place to make sermons. I would rather see trees with roots in the air torn up by storms; or look up now and then to see the still shower of red and yellow leaves; or rise to drink from the brook in the way; or walk a little in one of the paths which open everywhere as if the woods were infinite,—than sit in a house, and see wall paper, pictures in oil and steel, stuffed chairs, book racks, and such mean furnishing

for a study. I am always longing for this grand room in the forest, or some room with the sea dashing in at one side of it.

All the morning in question I was sauntering along this road, note taking; sitting on stumps, flat stone tables, or astride some mill log left by the way. When I reached the point where the road runs into a steep rocky hillside, I turned to the left. At that time, the path led among slender and graceful trees, lifting tufts of shade like young palms—since cut and sold for cordwood. I then followed an obscure track—now wholly overgrown—up the side of Beaver Hill. Big boulders here are plenty as pumpkins in a corn-field.

By the side of a table rock I found what appeared at a distance like a buffalo robe; it proved to be the thick heavily matted roots of fern and brake interwoven till they made a tough blanket four inches thick and two yards square. It had grown on the rock and been rolled off by the wind. This natural felt-cloth I seized, to make a carpet for my perch where I proposed to study. Passing to the very crown of the hill, there is a boulder equal in size to twenty feet cube, the height perhaps greater than the width. It has scratched along the ledge in glacial times, and the harrow stopped moving in its very tooth marks. One edge of the bottom rests on the planed rock below; the other edge is tilted up three feet and fixed on a triangular stone, which itself stands on one of its corners. Ascending to the top of this eccentric boulder, a fine sea

view appears in the southeast. It is a choice resting place for one who dislikes chairs and common study tables.

Carefully climbing by aid of a rough pole, with the root blanket upon my shoulders, my head was no sooner upon a level with the top than I saw a man lying there apparently asleep. Had I suddenly found myself lying round loose in an unexpected place, I could not have been more astonished: for he had on a thick drab suit like mine and a wide soft hat—good for the woods, rain or sun; and, though his face was turned from me, I could see that he was about my size. Rather won by his rig to claim him for a brother, I gathered myself up and stood beside him, so holding my mat, which had not been shaken or dusted since creation—that I could easily dash it into his eyes to blind and confuse him, should he upon waking prove to be an ugly customer. Bracing my foot ready for action, I said,—

“Good morning, my friend.”

Without turning his head, I saw his hand moving, and he quickly sprang to his feet, drawing a revolver so suddenly as to almost throw me off guard and off the rock. Relying on my dirty shield and weapon, and particularly upon my good nature, I looked him in the eye—my own eye glowing with kindness and mirth—and said again,—

“Good morning, my friend.”

His eye did not change, or his countenance; and, for half a moment he seemed to pierce me through and

through with his eyes, and to hold me off with fixed lips. But, my face retaining its humor unchanged, he quietly put up his weapon and extended his hand, saying,—

“Good morning.”

This put us at once upon a free footing ; which seemed very desirable on such footing as the narrow roof of the rock afforded. And we sat down together upon the fibre rug.

“It is only a little while,” said I, “since I saw two men praying together where we now sit ; and it would be a pity to make this altar run blood.”

This remark drew forth the beginning of an oath, which was only half uttered ; then, as if suddenly awakening from an ill dream, he turned and looked me fully in the face, saying,—

“Do you pray?”

“Certainly,” said I, “don’t you?”

“Yes, the swearer’s prayer, in oaths.”

We were silent for a moment: I thinking over the man I had found, measuring and weighing. As I had seen him standing, he was an inch less than six feet, and a hundred and forty pounds weight. He had now thrown his hat off. His high forehead, mild deep and easily kindled eyes, sunburned cheeks, full, dark beard, showed me the man in a new phase. He was about thirty years old I thought, with much wickedness overlying fine natural endowments. I felt a singular confidence that I had seen that face before,—where I could not then think ; and I afterwards concluded that

I must have been mistaken. The face haunted me for months, and I tried to remember whether I had not dreamed about him. It seems like a dream now, as I remember him standing on the rock.

“Where is your home?” I asked.

He took from his pocket a little Testament; and, having found a text, looked at me with a half quizzing expression—mingled jest and earnest—yet with an underlying malice as I thought. Then coolly taking out an Arkansas toothpick, he pointed with it to the words (John 1: 39),—“Come and see.” Upon this, I drew out an old bowie knife, which once appeared as witness in a California court, and which, coming into my hands, I often carry into the woods and in far wanderings on dark nights. Picking my teeth with the point I looked up laughing into his laughing eyes, and said,—

“Well, I’ll go anywhere with you, if you carry the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word.”

As if I might be a companion in his rascalities, whatever they were, he led the way; and—in for an adventure—I nimbly followed. Going down the northern slope of the hill, which is as familiar to me as the steps of my house, I saw that he was aiming for the Forty-foot Boulder; which, big as a house, lies like an egg in its nest in the bottom of a swampy basin, whose sides are clad with birch and the rim with pine. The growth of the timber in recent years now hides the rock from the observer upon the hillside, and conceals the form of the basin. Gathering up a handful of the

delicate, long fingered white moss found near the descending place, I went close to the quick heels of my companion to the side of the rock. An old birch clinging to a crevice has made a ladder way by which to ascend, and on top is growing a pine twenty-five feet high. My new found friend, spry as a cat, ran up the wooden path; and I followed. Upon the top was his rifle wrapped in a blanket; and scattered here and there were a dozen eggs and shells, a bread loaf, a few fagots, and the marks of a small fire. Standing and leaning his back to the pine, he asked me to sit. Fumbling for a very dirty pipe and tobacco pouch, he began,—

“I am an English detective searching for a man often in these woods. You know him. I want you to help me find him.”

Drawing forth several pieces of British gold, he threw them into my hat lying at his feet, saying,—

“I know who you are. I knew your boulder, and lay there to catch you far from the town where I must not be seen. I need not tell you that you must now pledge me your aid, or—never leave this rock. It will be better for you to take all the gold you want, and help me.”

This was said so quietly and decidedly that I knew he meant business. I merely rose to my feet, saying,—

“You do not dare to handle a pistol so long as you carry a New Testament. The Word of God will not allow you to do me harm. I saw your Testament half sticking out of your coat pocket before I roused you out of your sleep.”

"Yes, I know it," he replied, seating himself at the foot of the pine; "but you know my man. You are helping to conceal him. I will have him in my power or now use my power over you."

"I know your man," I answered, "and you will not find him or harm me. I had heard about this search and about you. My friend is in California, and you may catch him if you can."

This I said, looking fixedly into his eyes. For the first time, his eyes were unsteady; then I knew I was master and that he was merely testing my will. To my surprise, he merely drew forth a well worn pack of cards, and asked me to have a hand: saying, in a familiar tone,—

"Your cloth in my country sometimes try a game with me."

Said I,— "Let us be merry to-day, and make a fire."

Drawing a match, I set pine needles, dead leaves and twigs to burning; and with his little store of wood there was soon a bright blaze.

"My friend," said I, "I hate tobacco worse than George Trask does, and cards as if they were published by an Infernal Tract Society: burn both. Come to my house to-night; we will walk and talk to-morrow, and then you will ship for England. If I hear of your hanging around these woods any longer, I'll see to it that you hang in England, surely as your name is Johns."

The stranger poured out his fine tobacco into the flame; made a playhouse of his cards and put fire into

it ; cracked his pipe ; drew out a brandy flask, poured the spirit into a cavity of the rock and set fire to it, broke the bottle,—then turned to me :—

“I am not the man you take me for. No matter what my name is. I like your eye, and I believe in that, although I do not believe in your profession. Your friend is very likely beyond my present reach. In a twelve month I will see you again,—if I do not find him. Meantime, I will meet you to-morrow morning on Image Hill, and walk down shore for the day,—then be off : where, you need not ask. And I shall be obliged to you if you will get a letter for me at the Post Office to-night, marked Richard Johnson. But give me your word that you will not betray me.”

I said,—“Show me your right forearm.”

“My arm is not Sam’s arm ; it is clean,” said he. As he rolled up his sleeve I saw that the man—whoever he might be—was not he of whom Cephas had spoken. Rather taken with the adventure, and desirous of learning more of the man and his relation to the pursuit of my friend, I gave him my word ; then crept down the rockside, and went home. Not that day making my sermon, nevertheless I found a new illustration of one or two points of strong doctrine.

XVI.

A WALK TO NORMAN'S WOE.

NEXT day, unwilling to walk with a man who looked so much like myself, I put on a disguise and set out for Old Neck beach. I had finished my morning's writing; and the sun was well up, glowing with a good heat. An almost imperceptible breath from the sea tempered the air, and made it one of the most delightful of early October days. My heart was full of comfort; and I was rather glad to be a hundred miles from an old farmer, who used to afflict my childhood with the assurance that every particularly fine day was a "weather breeder." Let it breed, thought I; I'll not brood.

Walking across lots from the railroad station under the shade trees to the right of Sundown Hill, and leaping a minute finger of the sea, I climbed over the top of Thunderbolt Ledge; marking well the giant footprints in the rock, and half wondering whether I might meet man or demon that day on the hill tops. As I looked out upon the burnished deep, the waves were flashing and sparkling far toward the horizon; and I saw the spray rising wherever the water touched the

rocks. Pushing down through the singing sands into the musical waves, I took my bath ; and was then ready to walk with friend or foe. In my ignorance of human nature, I did not believe that a man who filled his pockets with New Testaments and pistols was likely to make any efficient use of either.

The morning light seemed to have touched the heart of the Englishman. I found him under the young walnuts, which — keeping open doors to friendly breezes from the sea — seek shelter from the northwest wind under the lee of Image Rock. The bald cliff above looked under the genial light not more inviting than did the detective's face, which while it still had stone enough in it had bright sunshine on it ; so that I thought we should have a good day. It was clear to me as the morning light that I had to do with a man of unusual capabilities, who had seen much of good society and too much bad. He was the perfect gentleman, with a smack of the vulgar villain about him ; a man of amazing native vigor, made a little fickle and shaky by the hard hand of his own sins. And I had already seen enough of him to know that his soul was like the deep sea in its responsiveness to storms or sunshine.

Our course led past Eagle Head ; and I could not resist the temptation to take my half wild companion out upon the knob. I led him far down the sides of this precipitous crag to a place upon the outside, where the waves were washing into an unseen cavern and making a hollow roar.

"Here is the spot," I said, "where my friend, whom you are chasing round the world, used often to pray; and I remember that he once spoke of praying for an old man in London. What do you know about that?"

"Your friend," he answered with curling lip and brightening eye, "is a thief. You ought to know it. He degenerated during his trip to England, and developed all his total depravity."

"Go West, and find him, I replied."

We walked down the bold shore toward Dana's beach not speaking a word. When we paused a moment upon the roof of Sunset Rock—the low crown which rises perhaps half way between the two beaches—my comrade began as follows:—

"Upon one dark afternoon, about a year ago, a boy called at my office with a message, the flavor of which I liked exceedingly. I went with him to a very dingy counting room, where I found an old man sitting by a table, upon which was a bag of gold, and a little portrait on a lady's toilet box painted by a French artist. At his motion I sat down, beside him, and he shoved along the picture and canvas bag, saying,—

"'Find this man—a Yankee; gone to America in a sailing vessel; robbed me of a jewel.'

"I asked the kind of jewelry taken. The old man arose, opened a vault, and took out another gold-bag.

"'Find this man,' he said, 'and I'll get the jewel. Your only concern is the man.'

"And then he pointed into the vault still open, where I could see the coin bags piled high, and repeated,—

"Get me this man."

"I knew at once what he meant; for I had,"—now the officer looked up with sudden fire and fierceness, with strange intensity and quickening of speech,—
"what you ought to know, not only a reputation for doing what I set out to do; but—"

"You old villain!" said I sharply. "Let me get you off the sand into this Brass Kettle here!"

For we had by this time at low tide walked down Dana's beach to the Kettle crevice, which opens seventy-five feet deep into the iron coast; a narrow orifice where two cannot go abreast, and where the breast of a fat man would plug the path. Lighted from above by a crack in the ledge, it is easy enough getting along when the tide is out. I pointed my precious rascal,—who was, however, something of a talker unless I was mistaken in him,—toward the ledge, where he did not seem to see the little opening. But I led the way, saying, with a merry laugh which took the frown out of his eyebrows,—

"Come in here. Good men and true, like you and me, ought to hide ourselves in caves of the earth."

So in we went, he saying, close behind me:—

"I am no villian. I have been thought to be unscrupulous; but I never did what I have often been tempted to do, and perhaps what I may do yet. As to your friend, as you call him, you are deceived. He is a hardened fellow. As soon as the old man showed me the French portrait, I recognized an American face whose likeness I had seen when he was under sentence

for a diamond robbery, but he had escaped. By finding him, I get the old man's prize, and one from the jeweller, and the government reward. This man must be found, and you will help, or—"

I hastily interrupted him when he came to "or,"—for he had grown very red in the face. "That is a boiling hot statement for such a cool kettle as this. My friend is all right, and you are the man that is deceived. You had better get out of this, and reduce your temper by walking into the surf."

"That is cool. I'll do it," he answered, quietly moving toward the mouth of this freezing kettle.

The tide was just turning; and heavy rollers were coming in from some distant storm. After plunging into the brine and pickling ourselves, we were soon on our way again down the shore. The sharp shock of an ice cold wave is a good thing for dampening an individual whose wrath is liable to flame. It would be a good arena for all disputants on warm themes to plant them bare in the edge of curling breakers.

Under the tall trees of the open but uncombed grove, we walked just back of the fisherman's path—to the Shark's Mouth rocks. There we lay down, and looked over into the foaming jaws. Crossing then a short beach to the craggy shores of Crow Island promontory, we waited to watch the waves battering the castle-like shores. Lunching under the oaks on the neck before coming to Crescent Beach, we then sauntered over the sands and mounted the heights beyond. We cracked nuts at Cobble Stone beach, where the

immeasurable water power of the Atlantic has been hammering stone for some hundreds of thousands of years; doing fine work, in rounding the rocks till they are almost perfect in shape, by knocking them together with thundering sound in time of storm. The detective rolled one of these hard-boiled eggs of the sea up to the bank: and I have my foot upon it now, under my study table, as I write. Then we walked by the coast line path toward the Flume. All this time, my strange chum was telling me the story of his search for my friend.

He had tracked him for nearly a year; to the Azores, Rio, New Orleans, Boston, and now to Cape Anne. In cities he had heard of him hoodwinking the police—as the detective said—by distributing charities to the poor! In the country he heard of him leading a half wild life, as if he were 'mad, or always hiding; with a strange streak of devotion about him, and pretending to some grand benevolent work to which he had given his life! But often the detective's suspicions were so confirmed by Cephas' mingling with the worst of men, by uncouth doings and sudden movements, that the officer felt more and more sure that my friend was the identical man whom he was seeking for a double crime. And it was not easy to shake him off from this belief.

"It is sure," he said, "as the ground I tread on."

Just then his foot slipped, and he would have fallen into the yawning chasm, to the brink of which I had carefully led him without his thinking that the next step was upon the edge of destruction; but I had kept

a quick eye and firm hand ready, and I planted his feet on a sure rock. A fissure three hundred feet long, sixty deep, four wide, with eight boulders beaded along the narrow top,—this is the Flume. The walls are precipitous as the side of a house. It is where a vein of trap has been cut out by the chiseling and sawing of the sharp sea waves; and the high tides still pour into one end of the chasm.

We were soon among the round stones in the bottom of the Flume. About midway we paused, looking up to the ribbon of blue sky; and we saw that one of the rocks directly over us appeared ready to slip from its place. But I pointed downwards saying:—

“Here is a rock upon which your jewel robber and I have covenanted together; and here we have prayed. I now aver to you again that you are mistaken in supposing my friend your robber. Your bungling French portrait deceived you. The real convicted criminal of the diamond robbery has been arrested in Chicago. I know it, and can prove it. I can satisfy you on this point. Probably this Chicago fellow is the man you ought to find. But I believe that you are hunting my friend upon wholly different grounds. And if you are ready to do it without more evidence than you have of any real guilt, then—you are not a good man and true. I believe, however, that you are a man having two natures, a pocket-pistol nature, and a New Testament nature. Kneel with me on this rock, and turn from a course you know to be wrong.”

I looked him fixedly in the eye while saying this, but

his eye never gave way. He answered with an oath,—
“Not ——.”

Turning to walk up the path, we were soon above ground. It is too cold to stay long in this deep sea cellar. When I saw how cool, cold and determined was my companion, I almost gave him over. I thought the ocean tonic had merely made his worst nature rally. And we walked on almost silently toward Norman's Woe. We paused, however, for a few moments in the little pine grove near the path; and stretched ourselves on the clean carpet of pine needles. I fell to thinking of my last reading of the Greek Testament there with a clerical friend, when suddenly my hard customer drew out his pocket Testament, and, with an expression almost malignant slowly read the words (Heb. 4: 15), — “*Was in all points tempted like as we are.*”

Measuring his words, he added this comment,—“If Christ had such thoughts as I have, he was a fiend.”

“Without sin! Without sin! Read again,” said I—snatching the book from his hand and pointing to the text—“Christ was tempted, but did not sin by allowing temptation to lodge in his mind a moment.”

The detective's lip was quivering. Handing the book back I saw a name on the fly in a fine hand, and so, changing the topic, I asked,—

“Will you please let me read your name in this book?”

“Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name (Gen. 32: 29)?” he answered.

He arose, and we walked on without speaking

till we stood upon the edge of the great gash cut a hundred feet into the face of the cliff at Norman's Woe. He sat down, hanging his feet over one of the worst places where he could sit, as if hoping to lose his presence of mind and fall. But his mind did not forsake him.

"This rock," said I, "is witness that I plead with you as a brother to turn off from your pursuit."

He whistled a few notes of an English street song, then rose, speaking in a tone of contempt,—

"Brother? Pursuit? I will follow this business to the bottom. I know my patron's purpose, and mine. And I know you. If it were not for your profession I would—"

He paused suddenly, drew his revolver, and flung it into the sea. Then added,—"I believed you last night that my game had gone to California, but this morning I learned something which makes me think him near by; now this Chicago lie makes me sure that your piety is like that of your friend. I believe you are playing false with me. But I will not play false with you. As for this jewel-snatcher, I'll soon have him." Then, completely changing his tone, and laughing, he said, "I wish I had my pipe and broken brandy flask, and I would drink and smoke to his health. But no more of this.—

"Can we go back by a new path? I hate to retrace any steps once taken."

We returned through the broad grove of pines by "the old road" to Kettle Cove; and then I made him

take back tracks, across the Black and White beaches and through the woods, up shore. Reaching Image Hill a little after dark we lunched, then picked up blanket and rifle secreted there in the morning, and I went with him across the musical sands to Walnut Cove; but he did not care to camp in one of the rare groves which mark either side of the landing, thinking the place too near houses. So we hurried past Lobster Cove, turning to the left, and climbed Gale's Point. When we came to the St. Andrew's pine, its wild cross-like shape was very sharply marked against the moon now rising from the sea a little past its full. My companion started like a guilty man in sight of the Saviour's cross. But in a moment he broke the spell:—

“This is a true St. Andrews. If I were to become a martyr, I should choose just such a headland as this, looking out upon the moonlit sea.”

Moving across the pasture to the Umbrella Tree, we kindled a little fire. I then bade the man good night, saying that I would bring a boat in the morning, and ferry him over to the Newport beach to take the Boston train; promising also to ask for a letter which I had not found by the previous mail. I left him toasting his feet, and leaning his back against the wall of rock on the south, under which he had spread his blanket.

But I could not go home: I retired to a nook in the rocks and began to pray. Soon, however, I heard a sound of voices which quite startled me. Rising in the darkness to peer over the top of my rocky battlement, I saw the Englishman standing by the fire look-

ing at his hands; and then he uttered a half wild cry,—

“My hands are not yet red! Not yet!”

Then he spoke softly, as if to a woman or to the angel dead: and the east wind bore the sound to my ears:—

“Go away mother: go away. Get up from your knees. You need not pray with me. I’ll pray.”

And the strong man kneeled down with his face toward the rock; but I could make out only the closing words,—

“ * * my soul to take.”

In a moment he had wrapped himself in his blanket and was still.

I hurried home, and—first finding a letter for the foreigner—slept soundly three or four hours; then arose, and under the light of the last quarter of the moon rowed down the harbor, so as to give the stranger an early breakfast and help him off. The wind had freshened, and the sky was becoming gray with mist, the “sleepy stars” finding it hard winking with so much wet on their eye lashes. The brood of the weather breeder was hatching. By the sound coming over Gale’s Point, the sea promised to breathe hard that day. Ascending the headland I was climbing over the wall near the camp, when I was led to stop before turning the corner of rock which concealed the sleeper, by overhearing his troubled dreams. It was a gentle, persuasive, loving voice:—

“Lie down, mother: lie down. I love you; but I cannot bear to have you praying for me all night. You need sleep.”

Then in a moment I heard a quiet, earnest tone,—

“Be still, be still, my child.”

“Do you say be still? How can I be quiet?”

And then he slept heavily. I went away to the top of the ridge where I had prayed the evening before, again to pray and watch for the dawning. But soon I heard a voice of prayer through the thickening mist,—

“Our Father, Our Father.”—

—An earnest cry, which I believe was heard in heaven. Then I saw the flames rise; and knowing the man to be ready for work I was soon at his side. He seemed a little surprised at my early arrival. Eagerly snatching the letter, he tore it open, saying,—

“I had a good sleep, with only a few bad dreams.”

The letter told him that his London patron was dead. And as there was no one else responsible for pushing his errand, he at once said that he would ship quickly as possible for England.

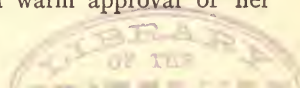
Going to Boston with him, I made sure that he understood from proper authorities that my assertion as to the arrest of the true robber was correct. And when he waved me good-by from the ship, he said,—

“I begin to believe that you and your friend are all right; and that I am all wrong.”

XVII.

SANDY POINT.

IT WAS only a few days after the foregoing adventure, that Cephas returned from California,—broken down and ready for a change of work. His wonder at the incident related in the last two chapters was scarcely less than my own. It was evident that the Englishman was not the one of whom Cephas had been particularly warned ; and who he was, could not be easily determined. Cephas concluded that it must be one with whom he had come in contact when searching for his brother ; and he recollected about the man for whom he had been mistaken, who was about his weight and size and not unlike him in some of his features. His subsequent correspondence with English friends gave him no clue to the matter. Once, indeed, Cephas said that Helen's father was one who would not hesitate to take the most decided measures to rid himself of any person who had ever crossed his whims or in any way incurred his dislike. Helen's next letter drove this notion out of his head by an account of her father's peaceful death bed, and his unusual kindness to his daughter, and warm approval of her



friendships. But after this, Cephas heard nothing more from Helen for some years.

The next parochial work my friend undertook was in that part of Nuntundale known as Sandy Point. This is an island, once connected with the main, and jutting out from it like an arm into the deep. It has been torn off by storms and the washing of the sea; and a deep frith now separates it from the solid shore. The Point is a narrow strip of sand, with forty miles bold unbroken beach, on what is called the outside, and various little harbors on the side nearest the mainland. Cephas first went there for a walk on the long beach. He became interested in the people, and stayed several months. This chapter will rehearse Cephas' account of the Six Days Excursion which introduced him to Sandy Point.

It may as well be said here as anywhere, that I shall have a standing quarrel with the reader who does not love the sound of the sea, and love it so much as to be glad of any excuse to walk by its waves. Lest, however, some man who goes through books on the jump—leaping forests and beaches in haste to get at “solid matter”—should find himself stuck fast in the soft sands of this long beach, I will say to him frankly,—

“My friend, you may as well stop and rest a week till I get through this sand strip.”

I cannot half tell this story of Cephas, without watching him in hours of idleness, as he saunters by

the seaside. I can no more think of him as separated from the scenery in which he delighted than I can now see his portrait upon my study wall without beholding also the frame that holds it. We will then read his own story in his own words,—his experience of Life on Sandy Point.

I had just read in my newspaper of an eminent theologian who, as it was said, had “gone abroad to find the absolute rest and recreation which such a man as he could hardly find in this country.” I too felt the need of a foreign voyage, and such a man as I went to Sandy Point,—a country unknown to me as Labrador, Greenland or Norway. By pushing out far into the Atlantic, I thought to gain the tonic of a sea voyage without its discomfort. I hoped to find, in penetrating these solitudes of sand, the absolute loneliness of a desert without going to Arabia or Sahara. Health is roaming over these sand bluffs: let invalids go forth to meet him. Sleep is to be found in these fishermen’s homes: let the weary and sleepless here find rest. The atmosphere of the Point is full of salt and the inexhaustible vigor of the sea; by it the nerves may be toned to new life. Dying man, rise up with energy, and you will find new years in wandering over Sandy Point. The immeasurable powers of the deep will be yours, and your old age will be as youthful as that of the hoary sea.

Going ashore from the fishing smack by which I crossed over, I at once mounted a high sand hill, which

overlooks the north end of the island. The smooth harbor and its crescent shore, the steeples on land and the topmasts at sea, the Black Fish Light, the fort, the distant shores of the main, sand under foot, and the blue ocean everywhere,—this was a pleasant introduction of a Saturday night to my next week's walk.

First day. I began my tramp Monday morning in a fog; first following a trail through a narrow belt of pigmy woods, stunted and tangled oak like the chapparal on the low hills of Mexico. Then I plunged about among the hills of sand, a trackless desert, without compass and in thick mist, striving hard to make a straight path. Soon I heard the booming of the sea, and this was my guide through the wastes. Climbing a ridge, thinly covered with beach grass, I came suddenly upon the high bank of the ocean; and then slid down its sliding sands to the waterside.

I walked as close to the pounding waves as I could, sinking my feet in the soft sands. When I was weary, I sat to rest on a bit of joist that had been cast ashore; and there reflected on my strange situation. Here I have entered upon an unbroken beach of two score miles: the shore is bare of drift wood and shells, and almost bare of sea weed and pebbles; even the sand fleas are not seen. All along the shore is a bank, low or high, shutting out of view the desolate sand hills and the homes of seamen. The sea is wrapped in fog, lifting or drooping to show a little more or a little less of the wide waters. The waves are always raising their

white crests and advancing upon the shore, then falling and retreating dark with mingled sand,—advancing and retreating as they have been every moment for unnumbered thousands of years, during day and night, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, sometimes in the raging excitement of a storm, but never without rising and rippling where the tide meets the land; sometimes bearing upon these shores a vessel in a winter night, drowning the crew and breaking the craft, but almost always as now coming upon the beach unladen, save with the atmosphere of health that I came here to breathe. Let me, therefore, rise and enter upon what seems an interminable towpath by the side of this narrow strip of raging waters.

But the fog is lifting and I see that other coasters are out this morning, they on the water and I on the land. Now I have found my solitude, lonely as a ship skirting foreign shores. If it be said that this beach be too soft for good walking, I answer that there is no better diversion to a man whose brain is weary, than to be obliged for six days to devote his mind to the work of continually lifting his feet out of the sand. I have nothing to do today but to walk along this beach. This I am rather compelled to do, this or nothing. On the one side is the incoming tide, on the other the high bank not very easy to climb; and I must trudge

“Along the shore of the unfruitful sea.”

It is not likely that I shall have much more intel-

lectual activity than the big clams, which live in the sands under my feet. I have found the very perfection of idling, and do not envy an oyster his mental quietness. Not today shall I go mad with thinking.

Second day. These days seem to me of wonderful length. One alone is in itself a "season" by the seashore. Yesterday I made seven miles in about seven hours; and the experience was as new as a week in Patagonia. Then, toward sundown, it took me more than two hours to explore a bank of pudding stone colored by iron. This morning I was four hours in following the beach less than three miles. In about fifteen busy hours on this shore, I have made only ten miles, two-thirds of a mile an hour: Sandy Point miles, doubtless, unmeasured, and irresponsible to any selectmen, and withal liable to be blown away,—so that nobody can tell how far I have walked; but according to Gunter I have moved like a snail. I shall never be able to make the first twenty miles of this beach in three days. This rate of locomotion would be too great for a man, who came hither to learn moderation and take life easy. Forty miles in six days? Why should I hurry and worry, in compelling myself to average seven miles a day?

Having turned inland for an hour, exploring among the settlers for bread and milk and a quiet nooning, when I came again upon the water side, it seemed more new than ever; as the waves rolled with sparkling life and white crests upon the long beach, and the breeze freshened as if I never breathed it before.

“ Here, where the sunny waters break,
And ripples this keen breeze, I shake
All burdens from the heart, all weary thoughts away.”

And now a new day seems to be opening; four or five hours by the unwearying sea. There is certainly a great joy in this beach: it does not soon come to an end; and it is not haunted by any other swells than those that come in from the sea. I love to go to beaches and shores, where there are not too many foot-prints. Thus far, I have found no other foot mark than mine between the water's edge and the bank; and only one boat, in a hollow beyond reach of the hungry waves. The surf here, even in quiet weather, curls too high for putting off boats. Mile after mile I am alone: turning one headland after another, a new vista opens before me of this unending solitary walk by the sea. This coast is as fresh to him who loves to be alone, as if it were Selkirk's Island. And the ocean here is as life-inspiring, as if it were made on yesterday. These sands are as new to me as if I were walking on a beach in one of the past geological eras; indeed Sandy Point can be hardly said to be made yet: here then is a world in its making, the shifting beach and shapeless hills, which are constantly changing under the strong winds.

If it be asked how I spend my time moving along this well graded sand side-walk, I will say,— Very innocently for one who leaves civilization, that he may stop thinking and quiet his nerves. I select the choicest pebbles I find, and look for those that have been perfected in form; and those not yet finished, I throw

back into the tide that they may be rolled up and down the sands for another century or two. And if I find a living sea-urchin I throw him as far as possible into the sea when the tide is going out, that he may find himself at home again. Then I watch for little fishes, that have come so near the shore as to be caught in a strong wave, and thrown far up the sand. I at once take up my profession, and moralize over them; wondering that youth should be borne away by a tide. The sand fleas feast on these unfortunate youth.

When I have nothing else to do, I go marching on; and this is a great diversion. What I may find on the unexplored leagues of the foaming shore I know not. Some parts of this beach are washed clean every tide, a current carrying away all drift, leaving not a chip and scarcely a pebble or bit of sea-weed. But a mile further on the distance is wider between the water and the great sand bank which everywhere shuts off the view inland, and the trend of the shore gives change of current, and here are found various spoils of the sea. Many a wreck of dragonfly strews this beach, with all their sails still shivering in the breeze. Fine fingers of sponge, coarse shells of horseshoe ten inches in diameter, sea-urchins by the score, star-fish very perfectly dried on the warm sand, whited skeletons of dogfish and flounder, whose bodies have been eaten by beetles and their bones long exposed to the sun, the jaw bone of a shark with a fine set of teeth,—these are the important discoveries which while away the hours.

I wish I knew the story of this fragment of stout

coat washed in by the last tide, and a little further down the beach another fragment of the same cloth. So much good cloth no patching seaman would willingly throw away; and I wonder whether the sharp teeth which rent it, found flesh within the coat. And here is a bottle just landed from an ocean voyage, corked and sealed; but the message it bears is in a tongue unknown to me, and I must wait to learn its tale of woe. [It was subsequently found to be a Portuguese love letter, corked up by some wild young fellow who was bound on a long voyage with little prospect of a daily mail.- He had thrown a bottle overboard every day for two weeks after embarking; and I found the fourteenth. It had been in the water eight months.]

Third day. I wonderfully appreciate the freedom of these three days solitary rambling over a few miles of lonely shore. I have absolutely nothing to do, but to sit on any stray barrel or bit of wreck or upon the edge of the high bank, facing the sea and breathing in salt air. I have no more care than a well fed sea-bird. I am as free from all intellectual anxiety as a sandpiper. No business can harrass me now. In the bright sunshine and by the bracing sea, I forget all heavy labors. And I enter the dashing waves freely as a South Sea islander.

It is my peculiar delight to examine the breaches in the wall of sand; which stays the waves from tearing up the country inland, fencing out the deep. These hills are anchored by cable strands of beach grass.

The winter winds fill with sand the spaces between the grass spires which grew the previous summer. Next summer the grasses will grow higher from the same roots ; and next winter will hide the summer's growth. So grow the sand dunes. This beach grass is essentially a military plant, fortifying the sand hills. It sends out runners like a vine : the leaders make off from the parent root in straight lines ; all along these leading lines new spires of grass rise like the spears of soldiers. Kill these grass roots ; and, between wind and tide, a few storms would shift the boundaries of land and ocean.

The waves, in time of storm, work on the sand banks like excavators ; digging to no inconsiderable depth for many leagues in length. Shoals and fingers of sand are formed, which are moved off by strong currents along the shore in the next storm. A vast amount of sand is in this way carried round into the "inside" of the island. Here it is heaped upon rocky foundations, and made into breakwaters to protect harbors. But these miniature "sandy points" are moving back and forth, according to the play of the elements : the sea shovels up the sand on one side, and the wind casts it over the point, and dumps it upon the other side.

Toward night, I found myself on top of one of these ramparts of sand. And while sitting there, I thought what a capital place this would be to be buried in. I have always wanted to be cast into the ocean ; but it will be expensive to charter a whale ship or ocean

steamer to take my body to sea, and I would like just such a bluff as this for my grave. It would not be my last resting-place. My dust would blow off into the deep, and then roll up and down this long beach age after age. No officious and blundering sexton would be clipping every tree that happened to grow near my head; and stupids would not be bending over an old stone trying to decipher my name. Who knows how it will be spelled when I am forgotten, and some benevolent gentleman plays the part of Old Mortality, and seeks to restore the head-stones of the obscure country graveyard where my bones must moulder, if I cannot get them into the sea.*

* NOTE.— If there was any one thing that Cephas felt bothered about it was the question what to do with his body after he had done with it. His inveterate habits of walking led him to object pretty decidedly to the stinted accommodations of our country graveyards. I find this topic alluded to in a letter written from Stone Cove: "My body will be loath to lie easy through many years in a common grave. My legs will long just to walk over the top of a hill, and lie down in some other valley for a year or two; and then tramp on again to some woodside or brookside where the weary rest. I am stoutly opposed to putting my bones into a quiet cemetery. If I could have my way, I would be buried in the deep,—not that I might rest in a soft white bed of tiny shells in the still bottom of the sea; but I would have my flesh give new vigor to the sharks, so that my frame could lustily cut the waves in the shape of fish muscle. Denied this, I would, if I could, be imprisoned in the viewless winds that sweep land and sea. Or, if I must leave my clay in one place, let it be on a little island, where the waves are always washing, and where the sea-birds are screaming, and the storms are pounding, and the salt foam is flying

These delightful thoughts detained me upon the bluff till the full moon rose out of the deep. Close at the foot of the hill, upon the north side within the hollow, were two deserted dwellings, and one of the shelters built by the Humané Society. Looking down shore, I saw a distant light upon the beach bank. I sat there till I shivered, and then went to the Humane House thinking that, in spite of all law to the contrary, I needed its warm shelter as much as any unfortunate seaman ever would ; though I took care next day to send the light-keeper who had charge of the house, three miles, to make good the candles and wood I used, so that no poor fellow should walk up dripping from a wreck to find the house without fuel. But I found it difficult to go to sleep early that night in my new character of wrecked mariner. I persisted in going often to the door and looking out upon the sea. And certain lines kept running in my head :—

through the air. I could imagine that my body would be reasonably still, for a little while, with such surroundings. I feel very sure that when my clay becomes incapable of motion in its proper shape, I shall, as a spirit, make it one of the first things I aim for, to go and stir up the dissolving elements and get the matter to moving as soon as possible, gas to gas and dust to dust : I will not be quiet till I get my body on its legs again, working through the soil or marching off on the winds. I have an insatiable passion for being on the move ; and when I once learn the style of traveling, which obtains in the unseen, I shall begin my journeys again."

It affords me unfeigned pleasure to state that a benevolent and genial Deacon — a large owner of sand — gave Cephas a house lot on the bluff mentioned in the text, in order that his pastor might be buried to his mind whenever he should wish.

“O lonely moon, a lonely place
Is this thou cheerest with thy face ;
Three sand-side houses, and afar
The steady beacon's faithful star !”

Fourth day. There is no more reason why I should climb every light house on the coast than why I should climb every lamp-post in Boston. But the light keeper, whom I found soon after daybreak, told me that I was the only stranger he ever saw, who did not make him go up stairs to show his lantern. I wandered most of the day among the farm houses. These homes half a mile or more from the beach bank are wonderfully homelike ; surrounded by sand hills which are covered with a thin soil and green grass. The uplands are never opened with the plough, lest the wind whisk away the farm. Crops grow in the valleys. The telegraph poles are ridiculously low, and so are the rail fences, and the thrifty apple trees. I could easily step over the fences, and take off the topmost apples without rising on tiptoe. It is needful that the orchards carry no top-sails ; and that they stand close-reefed,—lest the storms pluck them up by the roots and plant them in the sea. The houses are connected by green or sandy lanes with the great highway, which runs the whole length of this narrow island. The people are very kind. Taking not two meals in any one house, I discovered many friends. Where I found cream on the table, I knew that they did not sell their hospitality. The skim-milk people had a price.

Toward nightfall, I found myself in a little neighbor-

hood with several herring ponds in the vicinity. These ponds are mainly useful in keeping up the supply of mosquitos. Enough are raised here within a few acres to stock the island as far as they can fly. Knowing that the season was not quite over, I picked out a house with green blinds; and thought I would apply there for lodging, hoping that the window shields would defend me in the hours of slumber. The man of the house, at work in his garden, gave me a hearty welcome. I spent a delightful evening, chatting with the pleasant family. But I was tucked into a back attic to sleep, where I ran my head into the cobwebs in the night; and the one window had no blind. All the mosquitos from five herring ponds gave a free concert in my chamber; and opened a free market for supplying themselves with raw meat at my expense. I was completely demoralized.

Fifth day. This morning, before parting with the good people of the house, my hostess confessed that when she came home last evening, and found that her husband had given me lodging, she was considerably alarmed. She had read about men, who roamed up and down the earth to rob homes and murder the innocent. She could not find out that I lived anywhere. I had been a wanderer in distant and uncouth parts of the world. I was walking down the "back-side" of the island, where nobody ever walked who was sane and holy. Her husband had money in the house. She had worried about it many a night. And when she saw

me with my wicked beard, a 'homeless straggler in uncanny places, she felt satisfied that I was the man destined to figure in the annals of crime, as having murdered a household at the Herring Ponds for the sake of an old stocking half full of coin. But the good woman thought better of it, she said, when I took out my pocket Testament and suggested having devotions with the family before I retired. She had, however, made her arrangements to feed me out to the mosquitos before morning; and she could not in a moment make up her mind to disappoint her tuneful neighbors, or to disturb her nice spare bed.

Mem:—Wear clerical clothes, use razor and shears, walk in the roads where common people do, and sleep in the guest chamber. By so doing, life will be tame and comfortable, and the blood of a highwayman will never be sucked out of your veins by fiends of the air invoked to defend the helpless.

These herring ponds are very beautiful in the morning light. Many of the low hills, which encircle them, are clad with pines, perhaps twenty feet high. The woods are clear of undergrowth. A long walk through the timber discovers oaks draped with hanging mosses. Sometimes the trunks and limbs of dark pines are almost completely covered with white tufts of moss. The most diminutive trees thus appear hoary with age. The winding way I follow leads now and then over a hill top, where the view is very extensive. The country is well wooded, oak and pine, with vast tracts of beech on the shore — the leafless sand beach.

XVIII.

OLD HARBOR.

SIXTH DAY. I find many of the traveled roads here as weary walking as the soft beach; and inland I march without the music of the waves. An invigorating sea breeze, however, tempers the air, and it is a delight to live. When the stage overtook me this morning, I climbed to a seat beside the driver and an old man-of-war's man.

"Where have you been cruising this week?" asked Jack.

"Where are you bound?" asked Jehu.

These questions being answered, I began to look, and to question. Jack wore the navy suit; and every wrinkle and every motion spoke of the sea. He had rocked on the waves from early childhood. His home was lonesome. His companions were in ships. On his last voyage homeward bound he sighted his brother upon an outward bound Australian clipper in the South Atlantic. As the commanders exchanged a word with trumpets, the brothers waved their tarpaulins to each other; and they would not now meet again for years, as they had not met before for many a year. The

driver persisted that the water was "too wet" for him to go to sea; but the old salt hoped to die on the waves as his father and grandfather had died on ship-board and been buried in the deep. Within an hour, Jack asked Jehu to anchor in front of a minute white cottage. Straightway two stout young women came out, and greeted their father. Their mother had died two months since; their husbands were both at sea.

I was left alone with the driver. He proved quaint enough, with an unlimited capacity for spinning sailor-yarn; though many of the yarns he unreeled for me were too rotten to hold together and I lost confidence in him. His horses, he said, ate and drank from the trough of the sea; this accounted for the peculiar gait of the off leader, and the occasional swaggering steps of the nigh wheel horse. They have their sea legs on. Once Jehu drove,—as he said,—rather a stylish hack in the metropolis of Sandy Point; and a smart seaman, not bred in these parts, came off from the ship to take a day's ride in the country. The close carriage was chartered. The sailor mounted the box with the driver. As they were starting, a man came along who wanted to go up into the country, and offered to pay half the cost if he could be taken on board.

"If you will ride in the hold," said the sailor, "you can go for nothing; but you can't come on deck."

The stranger stowed himself in the hold; and Jack was master of the quarter deck.

I found a never ceasing interest in the homes we passed. Little hamlets on the "inside" of the island,

where most of the people lived, have for front yards mere patches of beach fenced in,—sand and beach grass and sea shells. It was not uncommon to find gardens fenced in by fish seines: this twine fence is taken under cover in winter, is easily fastened to the posts, is hen-proof, and hog-proof, and will last for so many years that it is called cheaper than lumber. The planks leading to the front doors are often from some old wreck. Heaps of clam shells about the back door, show that the “treasures hid in the sand” do much toward sustaining the population. “All seas are our cellars,” said Martin Luther. The Sandy Point people drop a line into their cellars, and then “suck of the abundance of the seas.” I did not see big barns and mowing machines and patent reapers; but harpoon, hook, line, bob and sinker, trawl, seine, lobster nets and clam forks,—all manner of gear for gathering the harvests of the deep. Accustomed as the people are to the sight of wrecks, they seem sometimes a little hard in the uses they make of these relics of the unfortunate. I saw the steel ribs of eight ironclads flying in the air for scarecrows in one corn field; skirt hoops in which the belles of Sakum Hollow had once coasted up and down the Point. What has become of the fair crew which once manned this formidable fleet?

The weather is threatening this afternoon, and the driver is very anxious I should see a regular northeaster. If I were to believe his words, I should see the very pigs, lean and lank, take shingles in their mouths, and beat up against the wind to gain new shel-

ter, when a storm tears down some frail piggery and then sweeps through the narrow streets of the Old Harbor like mad. We arrived in the suburbs of Old Harbor at about dark ; and made our first stop opposite a variety store, where the sign board contained, as well as I could hastily count, eighty specifications of groceries and ware for sale:—

“Shoepegs Bait, Soaps, calicos. Putty, ribbons. axes, figs. Perrfumes, castor Oil and tobacco. Snuff. bolony sassages, haM. onions, Peanuts, nails,—and fish—Hooks, salt, pickles ; Sugar : Beens ; tre nails. Anchors. RaSuns Hoans. Tee, coffee cheese. butTer, Sailors’ stores. Boat Hooks, Overhauls. fishin Boots. glass wair, fethers, mustard. glass bottels, pils.”—and forty-one more things !

I applied for lodging at the house over the way, being told it was a home for travelers. The landlord was an honest old salt, who took as much pride in his house as if it had been a ship’s cabin. But his heart was always at sea, and his words would never get used to the land. He spoke of his guests as making a voyage with him ; and said he had as many passengers on board as he had berths for. He described to me a house a little further on, where an aged ship master would entertain me ; going with me to the door-step, and looking down the street, he made a motion with his hand, as if he was throwing bait overboard, and said,—

“Go to the starboard, and take to the seaboard, and you’ll fetch it.”

I found my host wifeless and childless, with a niece for his housekeeper. As the night set in, the wind increased, and thick clouds made the darkness very dense. The sound of the rising gale made the old man uneasy; and as its violence increased, the drowsiness with which he began the evening gave place to wakeful watching; he would go often to the windows, next the sea, look and listen, and then walk the floor, then be seated and lean back against the wall, then rise and walk again to the window, then again move slowly around the room. Seeing that I was not likely to make him sleepless by any talk of mine, I began after a time to draw him out.

"I love," said I, "to hear the wind roar on dark nights, when it shakes the houses and stirs up the sea."

"I have heard gales and hurricanes enough in my day," he answered.

Little by little, he forgot the high wind raging outside, in living over again the storms of earlier years. On his cruise as master, a heavy blow found him close to the Florida coast in the night. It was pitch dark, and he was almost on the reefs; when a flash of lightning showed him a very narrow opening in the reef just before him, into which he dashed, and in a moment was in quiet water. He had pitched about in the region of Cape Horn, in waves running so high that when he was standing on the quarter-deck and the bow was diving into the hollow of the sea, he could see the crest of the next wave by looking over the top of the foreyard. A ship only a little distance from him

could not be seen, as they sank into the depths and the mountain billows rose between them. He lay in a storm twenty-four hours with his vessel half thrown upon her beam-ends, weighted down by the water on one side the clipper's deck,—the masts presenting an angle of forty-five degrees.

The captain thought he became a Christian, upon one night, when he was wrecked on a little island near the Gulf of St. Lawrence in dead of winter. He was washed up and down the rocks three or four times by the waves, like clothes on a scrubbing-board. In this moment all the deeds of his life flashed before him, and he then yielded his heart to God, standing by his resolution in after years. When thrown high up from the sea, he had just sense enough left to crawl away from the water. Several of the crew were washed upon the rocks and escaped alive.

They found four feet of snow on shore. Crawling into a barn they tried to warm themselves in the hay. The mate went to search for a house; and seeing a light they all made for it. The lone woman in the hut was loath to let them in; but such hospitality as she had she gave,—a scanty fire, and hemlock tea, and dried herring. At daybreak a party of wreckers came in, and demanded that the captain give them all the spoils of the ship, as the price of any assistance from them. This he refused; they went to the shore; and so completely was the ship stove on the rocks, that no fragment of the wreck was found more than six feet long. One shovel had been thrown high on the rocks;

and with it the crew buried two bodies of their companions: then the tool was stolen by one of the wreckers. They found six pounds of salt beef; and this was also stolen. A piece of sail large enough for a pair of overalls for each seaman was all that was saved.

The wreckers looked hard upon these men snatched from the sea; but one fellow, whose eye had some kindness still lingering in it, persuaded his comrades to give quarters to the wrecked mariners: and two and two were parcelled out to different homes, till the weather should allow setting them over to another island in the common track of shipping. The storm raged for two weeks. Hemlock tea and dried herring was all that could be obtained on the island. One woman had a pound of sea-biscuit, which she had stored up against a time of great distress, but only one taste of this bread did the captain get by special bounty. After knocking about from one island to another, the crew at last reached home. But on the home passage, two ships sailed in company: and in the hour of storm our captain persuaded him with whom he sailed, to take a certain course, diverging from that of the other vessel; and though they reached port in safety, their companion was never again heard from. The very morning of the day the captain reached home, his wife heard of the wreck; at noon she received a letter announcing his safety; and before night, he approached the window where she sat reading the letter.

Such experiences made the old man sick at heart, when he heard the roar of the ocean in the hour of

tempest. So, too, the widows of shipwrecked mariners do not love the sight or the sound of the sea. Old Harbor had suffered severely the former winter by the sweeping off of fishing vessels by the score. Six members of one family were lost in one gale. The crash of wrecks is a sound familiar. Every year or two, some heavily laden ship is broken up on the backside of the Point, and sometimes three or four score bodies are found on the beach after a storm.

When I retired to my chamber that night, a rough room unplastered, I found pasted upon the window casing these lines, cut from a newspaper, an extract from a book of poems.—Upon the smooth casing above was written, with a pencil, in a trembling hand this heading,—

“A CHILDLESS OLD MAN BY THE SIDE OF THE SEA.”

“There was a poor old man
Who sat and listened to the raging sea,
And heard it thunder, lunging at the cliffs
As like to tear them down. He lay at night,
And,—‘Lord have mercy on the lads!’ said he,
‘That sailed at noon, though they be none of mine;
For when the gale gets up, and when the wind
Flings at the window, when it beats the roof,
And lulls and stops, and rouses up again,
And cuts the crest clean off the plunging wave,
And scatters it like feathers up the fields,—
Why then I think of my two lads; my lads
That would have worked and never let me want,
And never let me take the parish pay.

No, none of mine ; my lads were drowned at sea,
My two — before the most of these were born.
I know how sharp that cuts, since my poor wife
Walked up and down, and still walked up and down,
And I walked after ; and one could not hear
A word the other said, for wind and sea,
That raged and beat and thundered in the night,—
The awfulest, the longest, lightest night
That ever parents had to spend — a moon
That shone like daylight on the breaking wave.
Ah me ! and other men have lost their lads,
And other women wiped their poor dead mouths.

“ ‘ Ay, I was strong
And able-bodied — loved my work ; but now
I am a useless hull ; ’t is time I sunk ;
I am in all men’s way ; I trouble them ;
I am a trouble to myself : but yet
I feel for mariners of stormy nights,
And feel for wives that watch ashore. Ay, ay,
If I had learning I would pray the Lord
To bring them in : but I ’m no scholar, no ;
Book-learning is a world too hard for me :
But I make bold to say,— O Lord, good Lord,
I am a broken-down poor man, a fool
To speak to Thee : but in the book ’t is writ,
As I hear say from others that can read,
How, when Thou camest, Thou didst love the sea,
And live with fisher folk ; whereby ’t is said,
Thou knowest all the peril they go through,
And all their trouble. As for me, good Lord,
I have no boat ; I am too old, too old —
My lads are drowned ; I buried my poor wife ;
My little lasses died so long ago
That mostly I forget what they were like.
Thou knowest, Lord, they were such little ones.

I know they went to Thee, but I forget
Their faces, though I missed them sore.

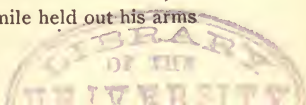
‘O Lord,

I was a strong man — I have drawn good food
And made good money out of Thy great sea —
But yet I cried for them at nights ; and now
Although I be so old, I miss my lads.
And there be many folk this stormy night
Heavy with fear for theirs. Merciful Lord,
Comfort them ! Save their honest boys, their pride,
And let them hear, next ebb, the blesseddest
Best sound — the boat keels grating on the sand.
But Lord, I am a trouble ! and I sit
And I am lonesome, and the nights are few
That any think to come and draw a chair,
And sit in my poor place and talk awhile.
Why should they come, forsooth ! Only the wind
Knocks at my door, O long and loud it knocks,
The only thing God made that has a mind
To enter in.’

“Yea thus the old man spake,
These were the last words of his aged mouth,—
BUT ONE DID KNOCK. One came to sup with him,
That humble, weak old man ! knocked at his door
In the rough pauses of the laboring wind.

“What He said

In that poor place where He did talk awhile,
I cannot tell : but this I am assured,
That when the neighbors came the morrow morn,
What time the wind had bated, and the sun
Shone on the old man’s floor, they saw the smile
He passed away in, and they said,—‘He looks
As he had woke and seen the face of Christ ;
And with that rapturous smile held out his arms
To come to Him.’



“Can such a one be here?
So old, so weak, so ignorant, so frail,
The Lord be good to thee, thou poor old man;
It would be hard with thee if heaven were shut
To such as have not learning. Nay, nay, nay,
He condescends to them of low estate:
To such as are despised He cometh down,
Stands at the door and knocks.” *

Next morning, which was Sunday, the young house-keeper told me that her uncle had some years before lost his only children, two vigorous young men, in a storm off this coast. They perished on a ledge a little out of the harbor, in full sight from my chamber window. And an easy chair by this window was the old man's observatory, where he spent hours together of daylight, looking out upon the deep,—in quiet hours when the picture is very beautiful, and in days of wild storm; but he sees little else than that fatal rock. When I learned that the spot is commonly called, “the Deadman's Ledge,” it was some weeks before I could look down the harbor without half shuddering.

This young woman's grandfather, the father also of my host, led a hard life in the way of sea-faring adventure. He was one of a crew of seven, who lost sails, bowsprit and rudder on the Georges Banks in early winter; and then floated upon the Atlantic two hundred sixty-one days. They had only a week's provisions, and one barrel of water; but lived upon what

* Jean Ingelow, Poems :—“*Brothers and a Sermon.*”

fish they caught, and such sustenance as they could get from a quantity of chocolate and rum on board. They cut away all their upper works for fuel. Rain water offered them drink, but they were at one time without water for three weeks: two died of thirst. During all this time they saw only two vessels. A few days before they were taken off, they caught a rat, which seemed the sweetest morsel that ever passed the lips of five starving men. They were then rescued by the ship of an enemy, the country being then at war. The British captain took them into New York harbor and gave them a boat to make their way home.

“My grandfather’s body lies in the graveyard back of the house,” said Huldah. “Perhaps you would like to go there.”

Before church service, I went to the burial hill; where the sleepers could still hear the sea roar, if their ears were not heavy. The mariner had died a little past middle life; and this was his epitaph,—

“Though Boreas’ blast and Neptune’s waves,
Have tossed me to and fro,
In spite of both, by God’s decree,
I harbor here below.

Now here at anchor do I lie,
With many of our fleet,
In hope again for to set sail,
My Saviour Christ to meet.”

I saw one monument, upon the very height of the hill, which bore the names of seventy-eight Old Harbor

men, who had perished in one gale on the fishing banks forty years ago.

The wind is still blowing wildly this morning, a dry gale, filling the air with sand and producing general discomfort. Coming down from the grave yard, I walked through the town. Near the corner, where the little custom house stands, I saw a Sandy Point fisherman navigating the streets against a heavy head wind.

He was laden with his wife's new bonnet, stowed in a bandbox, evidently taken from a house near by, where I saw a small milliner's sign tacked on the corner. His wife was going to church with new head gear that day. Walking behind him were three young ladies, a gentleman, and one who seemed to be a constable or some such dignitary. Jack had his hat pulled over his eyes, and his head bowed, to keep the cold wind and sand from cutting his face; and he was "tacking" this way and that, crossing and recrossing the narrow way, keeping no watch out for breakers. When close in front of me, he ran foul of a stone post; and he was under such headway that the post smashed the bandbox, and knocked him down. His heels, flying in the air, struck one of the ladies in the pit of the stomach, felling her to the ground. The constable interfered; and was about carrying him to the lockup for being half seas over: but the sailor convinced the official that he was merely "beating" in a storm. Getting under the lee of an alleyway, I helped him examine his cargo. The cover of the bandbox was carried away in the gale; but after taking off the

wrapping papers, the duck of a bonnet was found safe.

Going into church, half an hour after, I saw Jack in a corner of the entry telling the yarn with great gusto. I must confess that as I stood by the stove, I had the curiosity to look about the meeting house a little, to see whether the bonnet had come to church; but I did not recognize it, though I saw a good many which looked as if they had been badly smashed in some former period of the world's history.

XIX.

AMONG THE ISLANDS.

IN a recent visit to Sandy Point to converse with Cephas' old parishioners, I found that almost every man spoke of him as one who loved to be much alone. The walk upon the Long Beach described in preceding chapter, indicates the way in which Cephas spent no small part of the time during his brief Sandy Point pastorate. But there was a purpose in it:—

“The beach is a closet, and the doors are shut about me. Locked between land and sea I pray for personal privacy, for long hours in the study, and for invalids who cannot reach the life-giving sea.”

“Sometimes I go upon the beach at low tide at nightfall, in a time of dense fog and heavy sea; and step into the edge of the waters so far as to get a full view of the rise and curl and breaking of the waves. The bare reach of sand behind, and the fog concealing so much on either side yet revealing so much on the side next the sea—where the white waves are swiftly advancing with high crests and heavy fall and deafening roar,—give a sense of solitude and the nearness of

Infinite and overwhelming Power, as if the world unseen had opened and one were standing alone in the great Presence. The soul of the devout man is aided by such surroundings in making an entire surrender of himself to God; and his prayers are quickened by a more perfect sense of being alone than one easily gets in a common closet."

A whooping-crane now stands upon a pedestal in my study; which Cephas procured at Sandy Point and presented to me. This dead and stuffed form was once a living preacher. He used to stand in a marsh, and harangue a multitude of his fellow-cranes by the hour; after hearing him a little while they would give assent by a general outcry, and then he would go on again. At the time he lost his life, the noisy crowd had gathered to go south, filling the air with deafening clangor, like an army uttering a confused cry.

"Unless rich spiritual gifts are yours," says Cephas' letter with this gift, "you have little more dignity than an eloquent crane."

Cephas did not spend his time at the seaside in merely wading into the water like a crane, or stand idling—first on one leg and then on the other—with an eye out constantly for a good dinner.

As his health improved, Cephas took up new work among the islands of the Nuntundale Archipelago, to the eastward of the Island Home. I once accompanied him in his parochial round. Any reader who loves to linger by the sea, will be glad to wander with

me a few pages in visiting the pleasantest home Cephas ever occupied,—a home in flitting like a bird from one rocky isle to another, never weary of the sound of the surf and the sight of the sparkling waters. I have little hope, however, of reproducing the vision which so attracted me ; and my homely notes can be of little use, unless by them some one may be led to see these islands for himself.

Upon our first Sabbath in a village of four thousand inhabitants, I looked about to find a church spire ; but the masts in the harbor were the only spires I saw. The meeting-house, was very much like an enormous barn, shingled on the sides to make it warmer than clapboards could. Inside, we found things as they had been for a hundred years—save that the unused galleries were now boarded up ; the floor rising toward the back ; the seats solid, venerable, impressive ; and truncated pyramids on each side the reading-desk to support the lamps.

Upon Monday, we made a trip through an immense extent of low pines : thence across a prairie country in the heart of the island flat as a floor and out of sight of the sea ; then followed the eastern beach for some miles, part of the way under a bank a hundred feet high. Next, turning north toward the mouth of the port, we followed a strip of marsh, a few rods wide and nine miles long, which separates the harbor from the ocean. This low green wall rising just above water line, like the belt of a Pacific lagoon, is a very cheery walk by wild or calm water.

The people on this island seemed to me more friendly on short acquaintance, than any I ever met elsewhere. Business, by which many had become rich, had gone into decay; and there was an appearance of leisure on the part of the whole population. Their kindness, and confidence in human nature, seemed surprising. A boy would leave his play and go some squares to show a traveler upon his way. A store-keeper left his shop, and went a long distance with me to point out where a man lived. My friend who wanted to visit the museum, was astonished to hear the town-crier ringing his bell in the streets, and calling out for the janitor to wait on the stranger.

Isolated as they are, the people all know each other, and every new face is marked. No rascality can be cut up on the island, without its being known at once who did it; and no one can slip away without being missed. Men of bad habits are sent off. Entering the open door of a candy, cake, and tea establishment, I found no keeper. After considerable time he appeared, having been absent watching with a sick man. In another shop, in the evening, after I had waited some time, a boy came in from a neighboring house to see what I wanted to buy. I told Cephas that he would do more good in trying to get people to emigrate to this happy island, than he would by preaching to persons living there.

Our passage to the small islands in the north was marred by sickness, so severe as to lead me to have great respect for that theory which pronounces the whole

Atlantic ocean one vast dose of ipecac ; and I sympathized heartily with the Yankee minister who "vomited one-eighth of the way round the world on a pleasure trip." I was much struck by the singular appearance of some of the islets we passed. There was one island about forty feet long, with overhanging cliffs at each end, and two trees growing upon it like masts with full sail ; it was called Schooner Island. Not far from it two sharp ears of granite rose out of the water, nearly fifty feet high ; as if some gigantic Jack had gone down there leaving his ears standing for fishermen to steer by. In approaching our destined port the shores were very bold ; usually forty feet high, perpendicular or overhanging the water. Turning the point to make the harbor, a large sized tree was discovered jutting out like a bowsprit from the lean soil on the verge of the rocks ; in its youth partially overturned by a storm, now firmly rooted and holding its place in the very track of the tempests.

The cleavage of the rocks is such as to afford remarkable seats arranged all along the waterside ; as if the islands were so many amphitheatres for inviting spectators to witness the play of the waves and their fierce battle. Ordinary tides make as much surf on these islands as ordinary storms do on the mainland : and when long gales have stirred up the sea, the shock of the waves seems to threaten the stability of the rocky shores, the spray dashing completely over the few roods of soil.

“They come — they mount — they charge in vain,
Thus far, incalculable main !
No more ! Thine hosts have not o’erthrown
The lichen on the barrier stone.
Have the rocks faith that thus they stand
Unmoved, a grim and stately band,
And look like warriors tried and brave,
Stern, silent, reckless, o’er the wave ?”

In little hollows made rich by decaying rock, deep dyed flowers flourish. Patches of garden show where the families of seamen are anchored, while the men themselves ride the high seas. The bits of granite, which compose the archipelago, seem to have been dropped into the sea that sailors might breed upon them, like gulls, conveniently near the water. The old salts about here have been “pickled in the brine from birth.”

“The moist waves of the sea they sailed,”

early and late. Here was one who began as a boy and followed the sea more than forty years, twenty-nine upon the quarter deck ; his keel made miles enough to circle the globe forty-seven times, with sixteen thousand knots thrown in for a pleasure excursion. There was a time when one person out of every twelve in these islands was master of a ship. These dwellers in the ocean always see, passing by their doors, ships sailing to the uttermost parts of the globe. And these winged heralds are always calling to the men on land, morning, noonday, or evening,—telling them to be great

hearted, and to sympathize with humanity upon every shore. By the swift ships they send greeting to all the globe.

I went into the little school-house, to see what the children saw. From every window, they could see the ships going upon their errands, or there was a view of the distant main. It was much like looking out from a cabin or forecastle. The teacher said that he felt as if he was living on a large ship, anchored with a fleet in mid ocean: so present was the peculiar scenery of the sea.

Staying on such land as this is like a voyage, with every breeze salted. Life here is a perpetual camping out; one has apparently nothing to do but sit upon the rocks and thrive in the even temperature. The waves cool the air all summer, and warm the shores all winter. And the daylight is longer than on the mainland, for the sea is like a mirror, catching upon its vast reflecting surface the first beams of day, and lighting up the atmosphere long after sunset. Evening after evening, we were lying upon the shelves of the rocks toward the west, far into the night; it seemed as if the day would never fade. Morning after morning, I rose to climb the highest headlands at daybreak; thinking I might

“Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.”

My mind is full of pleasant pictures of the rising sun, glancing upon many waters, and touching the white

foam that breaks on many a shining shore. All day long, the sunbeams were playing on the quiet deep, and the waters were dancing about the rocks of green isles and desolate reefs. And when I am told of any earthly beauty, I think of that native of one of the Greek islands, who in the vale of Tempe was asked to praise its beauty; but he looked about and said,—
“The sea, where is it?”

The islanders told me that upon each Sabbath the words of their pastor were as if he had come from the very presence of God, that he might lead them with loving hand to One whom he loved with a passion of devotion. And that in his ordinary meetings with the fishermen and their families, his warm hand and kind words seemed to proceed from a hidden life. They took knowledge of him that he had been with Jesus.

Cephas once gave me some account of an old man, who had been pastor among these islands during half a century. He was too infirm to frequent the sanctuary, but not too old to pray among the crags. Cephas found Father Kent one sunny day under the lee of a great rock upon a high headland; his attention was arrested by hearing his own name mentioned in intercession by the trembling voice of the aged man. Without discovering himself to the devotee, Cephas contrived to fall into his company when he saw him slowly picking his steps towards home.

“Good, morning, Father.”

“A fair day, my son.”

“Is the day fair with you?”

“It is always fair, if I can do as I used to do; if I can get into the pines yonder to pray, or come up to weep before God under the lee of this head.”

“I hope that you always pray for the old church and the new minister.”

“I do, my son. I pray that you may pray. By two hours of prayer you will come to more understanding than by all day work in your study without it. God will not leave you to think time wasted spent in His company. Let other men seek books, do you cleave fast to the unseen God. The best boon in life is to gain ‘that light which being compared with the light is found before it, more beautiful than the sun, and above all the orders of the stars.’”

I have tried hard to locate the Rock of Intercession, as I found it alluded to in Cephas' papers. It is upon one of the islands in the Nuntundale archipelago. I cannot tell for a certainty upon which island it is, though I have within two years searched for it. I am not sure that I have seen it. It appears to have been an abrupt ledge of great height near a village, with a secluded vale upon at least one side of it; from its top a fair vision by day of moving tide, bending treetops, outcropping peaks of granite, and in the night a sense of great nearness to the stars and a perfect isolation, as if there were no houses near it and no passers by in the roadway under its foot.

It was upon this Rock in the night time,—as I con-

clude from his manuscripts,—that Cephas consecrated himself in a peculiar manner to a life of intercession. Here the Shagbark was devoted to a new use, not only for a life of prayer but primarily prayer for others. This peaked Rock and the vale hard by bore witness to the fulfilment of the midnight vows. It cannot be so properly said that this was the formation of any new habit on his part, as that it was an era in which he brought to the very front that which had entered largely into his life in former years.

Once when Cephas with heavy blankets spent the entire night upon the Rock of Intercession, he fell asleep in the small hours and dreamed of the dead Helen. In her glorified form she stood at his side, and touched him, saying,—“Arise, and pray for the dark populations, who do not see Christ the Light.” And, after that, he led a new life, in respect to world-wide prayers: this touch of the angel hand giving new impulse to his intercession for those whom he had little hope of reaching by personal ministry.

Sometimes, as the Island pastor was pacing lonely beaches or looking out from some rough rocky castle on the brink of the sea, he was startled by the cry of the loon, floating like an air bubble upon the uneasy waves; and he always remembered the Indian superstition, that this weird voice is the cry of a lost soul. But his mind dwelt less on future spiritual disaster, than upon the present loss of power and privilege. He had faith that prayer was a true missionary power in the world, coupled, as it always must be, with care-

ful devising to set on foot moral movements, which will affect distant continents and the lone isles of far-off seas. He delighted to take a map, and spread it out before the Lord.

“We often speak of seas, streams, mountains, forests,” wrote Cephas, “but the ragged outlines of the continents, and the myriad isles of the earth are also full of beauty. I love the map; to look at the world as a whole, as if an apple in my hand, or spread out as a picture before my eyes. If I open the map upon a hill top, I remember what I have read about these countries, and love to look on the world as my parish; I especially remember the words of prophecy and pray for the reign of Christ in every land.

“I ask blessing for all who dwell near the great mountain ranges of the world, the dwellers on the flat plains in the center of continents; and those who live in wide river valleys, or by the sea, and those who ride the waves. I would pray eagerly for the dense populations of cities; but more especially for neglected lands, where men are few and savage,—for whom few prayers are made. Where the millions gather there is the spot for establishing God’s kingdom; but He also loves the solitudes of the world. There is no favorite place with Him. New Zealand and South Africa are dear to the heart of Christ as Olivet and Gethsemane. Alaska and Australia, Pekin and Timbuctoo are as precious as Nazareth and Nain. Our God made the whole round world; and He loves Greenland, Labrador, Siberia and Patagonia. He has purposes of mercy for all. Every

part of the world's map will one day be marked with white ; and the banner of Christ will rise on every peak of the Andes, and by every wild stream in the deep forests of Brazil, and amid the deserts of Africa and on the wild steppes of Asia. The Turkoman rides over soil that belongs to Christ. Christian churches will rise in every Chinese village, and amid the heated homes of India, and on the cool sides of the Himalaya."

"Thou art sore troubled in mind for Israel's sake," said the Lord to Esdras: "Lovest thou that people better than He that made them?" Cephas prayed, not because he had any fear that the Lord did not love men better than he did: but he would fain talk with his Father about all the works of His hands, and live intimately with Him according to the Scripture ideal. And he heard a Voice saying,—“Concerning the works of my hands, command ye me ;” and “I will be inquired of to do it for them.” It was because the Lord loved men, that Cephas prayed for them.

Often in the winter he found shelter from the wind upon the sunny verandas of summer houses close to the sea. And these floors witnessed the prayers of a prostrate man, pleading for the multitudes wherever they are settled upon fragments of land washed by the great world of waters.

“Oh, ye dwellers by the sea,” said he who rose before the daybreak, “I will tell you how to redeem the time. After eight or nine hours’ sleep in a winter night, rise at six, go by starlight to the lonely beach at

low tide ; and, if the air is still and not too keen, pace up and down the smooth frozen sand, and wait for the full sunrise. There is a freshness and beauty in the sky and on the sea and the shore, such as is never seen at any other season, hour or place. The hard and level floor of sand banked behind by bulwarks of ice and snow, the strange coloring on the water, and the glow of the morning clouds and light, seem to suggest another country from what is seen by night or full daylight or under the setting sun. It is a world by itself. It is not night nor common day ; but a season strange as if upon another planet. It is a rare hour in a whole lifetime ; like a morning of spiritual communion with another and better world. It is in such a closet, that I give up all my care to God, and render thanksgiving. So is my morning hour like a holy day, before I begin my common day's work."

"I often go to the shore of the ocean in winter ; when the water is smoking like the plains of battle. The air is very cold, and the warm sea sends up clouds of vapor. Some of the tongues of mist are almost flame-like, in the light of the low winter sun. When it is so cold that my breath steams like an engine, I sometimes find that the surf-line has entirely disappeared under a thin coating of ice, which covers the shallow water all along the coast. The whole surface of the sea is level as a floor ; and the heat of the water makes the northwest wind smoke wherever it dips into the deep. The vapor goes whirling like loose snow drifting over an ice floe, with the blue pavement seen

through the curling white mist. Far at sea the whole ocean is dense with vapor; and the topsails of a schooner move along above the white cloud like an ice boat before the wind. But these pictures are made perfect only by the figure of him who occupies this scenery as the temple of his Father, and the house of prayer."

XX.

A WALK IN THE RAIN.

THE Long Sands at York extend a mile and a half ; and are six hundred feet wide at low tide, — the widest beach on the New England coast, unless it be Coffin's beach, or the north end of Old Orchard. One cloudy evening, when the first quarter of the moon was shining in the west, I had walked half up the Long Sands ; and it was so dark that the distant horns of the beach could be hardly seen. The sea-wall on the left seemed very low, and dark, like a distant coast. The beach was so gradual in its slope, so flat, so wide, that—walking midway between the beach bank and the water at low tide—the crests of the waves rising and combing upon the sands appeared, in the dim light, to be upon a level with the part of the beach where I was walking ; and, on the other hand, I could see little rise in the slope of the beach toward the land,—so that I was, to all intents, upon the level sea. The beach was very wet, as wet as water ; and the moon shone upon the wet sands making a path of light as if upon the sea. Away to the east I could see Boone Island light, and to the

southeast the Isles of Shoals light; and on the west, inland, I could see two or three lights in distant houses, like lights at sea. Altogether, I had a unique sensation; as if walking on the sea,—a coaster on foot, taking a voyage upon the sands. While walking inland the same night, over strange roads, I was able to keep my bearing by reference to the lighthouses off the coast, as I still sailed upon my sea legs over the old town of York.

Very naturally, I occupied my mind in some part of of this lonely walk, with thinking how differently things appear to us by night from what they do by day. The familiar beach had been as strange to me as if I had walked upon another continent in another zone. And I thought how differently the plans of youth appear to us under the lights and shades of later years. Pet projects, in which we were thoroughly at home, are now foreign to us. And I remembered the perfect passion my friend Cephas had for literary work when he was a boy. He composed the most improbable and highly sensational stories, and edited a boy magazine. When he ought to have been at the dinner table or at play, he was writing most furiously at a small light-stand in the attic. Once he told me that his ideal in life was to be an obscure person having a vast influence with his pen: he would like to hide himself, but push out ideas into the world, which should be of the greatest benefit to society. That he should be personally obscure seemed to me more probable than that he should fulfil the rest of his ideal.

I wondered whether his childish notions had not wholly changed under the light of manhood. He had always been reserved in talking about this in later years; and, aside from the conversations in the chapter on the Old Red Trunk and the one following it, I knew little of his views on book-making. Still, in his very last talk with me, he had said something indicating that posthumous influence was one of the phantoms he was still chasing. To a man of my mental make-up this seemed a very erratic wild goose to follow; to be shrinking from applause in one's lifetime, but not without hope that, goose-like, he might be of more use to the world dead than alive.

When I had finished my walk, and come round again to the Short Sands, I sat for awhile upon a little knoll looking out upon the dark sea, listening to the heavy fall of the breakers; and there settled it that the next time I should see Cephas,—who was at this time laboring at Spit Head in the Archipelago,—we would touch bottom on this topic.

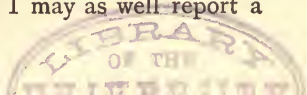
The next time I saw him, was when he stood over my prostrate form, as I waked from a sound sleep, on the top of Little Neck Hill in Ipswich. I had camped there for the night, soldier-fashion, with a patent knapsack, which readily unfolded into a bed. With blanket and rubber strapped over me, I had made a very comfortable night under the stars. At daybreak I saw Cephas with a cane trying to kill a gnat on the wing near the tip of my nose.

The first part of the night I had slept well, but was

waked before midnight by the unearthly outcry of one of the big oxen in the pasture with me. When I first opened my eyes, I thought the heavens were all on fire; so bright were the stars, and so great the contrast between waking up in a dark chamber and under the blaze of so many distant suns. Meteors were flying overhead and mosquitoes around my head, and I found it difficult to go to sleep again. Just as I was about to drop off, up came a fragment of moon out of the sea; and I had to lie awake at least an hour and a half, watching the strange light on sea and land. When the small moon had made such progress in its upward journey that I felt sure it would not fall back into the waves, and when the third ox had expressed his indignation at being disturbed in the night by bad dreams or by the pranks of goblin or fairy, and when I was tired of looking for more falling stars, I fell into a deep sleep,—and waked to see Cephas.

“Can you sleep with all this going on before your closed eyes?” said the spectre with a cane. As I looked, the dawn was just glowing upon the world of waters in the east; the face of the deep reflecting the colors of the sky as if upon a vast mirror,—plains of mother-of-pearl or opal,—changing with the varying hues of the morning. Cephas sat down to make a note of what was going on in the orient; and I sat by to prompt him.

“The newspapers,” he said, “are sending out reporters to attend prize-fights; and I may as well report a sunrise.”



The reader who is opposed to sunrises may skip the next paragraphs. Those who usually lie abed in the morning, or who were never fortunate enough to camp out on Little Neck, may with me look over Cephas' shoulder, and read his notes.

"Mem. A wine-colored sea, but deep blue in the distance: a star glowing like fire from the midst of a ruddy sky. The wine-color after a quarter of an hour changes to the richest purple, which is then the prevailing tint for half an hour. The deep blue on the horizon after a time also turns into purple, at first very brilliant then deep and dark. A sloop is seen in the distance, working across the painted sea. The coloring varies in intensity, and assumes the form of ten wide belts of purple extending from the horizon to the shore. On the right the sea is like white wine. To the left, dark clouds and ribs of colored sky lie low over Plum Island. Over the open sea eastward and directly in front of us are banks of glowing topaz. From the place where the sun will rise there is an immense cloud of dark and shifting shades of red, rising like a gull's wing and flowing far north. The bright purple sea is now changed to a glowing ruddy hue, and this color holds perhaps fifteen minutes, while the clouds above are all ablaze.

"Meantime, a white mist has been rising from the lower part of Plum Island in the near foreground on our left; so that it is now like the rim of a coral island with a lagoon in the centre. Banks of sand are on the side toward the sea. Trees and clam houses appear

along the western margin of the island. And the river so called, on the west of the island and stretching to the north, is now reflecting the bright colors of the sky. Ducks rise and wing through the air, then suddenly wheel and make for the inland marshes, crying as they go. Turning to the west up the Ipswich River, and northwest stretching toward Rowley, the marshes are covered with white fog: round hills rise out of it like islands; and the forms of trees are dimly seen upon the hill-tops.

“A fisherman’s dory appears on our right, coming out of Ipswich River. Beyond the river are the sand dunes still dark, and a dark sand beach. And the long point of Cape Anne is seen, reaching out into the sea, like a dull cloud-bank resting on the water. I cannot, however, keep my eyes off the golden east: the gold all at once changes to red, then golden maroon, then auburn, then golden auburn, then auburn clouded, then straw-colored cloud and darker shades. When I turn again to the west, I see the clouds of red-rose overhanging the Ipswich hills and spires. And in the near foreground, northwest, is Great Neck Hill with some fourscore cattle camping on it, not yet risen; and their forms are reflected in the rose-colored water, which makes up from the river between the Little and the Great Neck.

“Now, in the east, the sun is rising like a glowing furnace, sending his greetings along the waters; and the whole world about Little Neck is enlightened by a new day. The clouds over the sunrise have changed to one

quiet bank of deep auburn. The massive golden bridge from the sun to Little Neck is too bright to look upon. I turn my eyes rather to the deep rosy hues that play over the bar, and the unmeasured miles of watered silk which yonder sloop is sailing over.

"The changes on the face of sea and land are taking place so rapidly as to outstrip all note taking. The waters grow wonderfully bright. The mist about the sandy headlands at the hither extremity of Plum Island rise, obscuring the outlines of the cliffs. The tents and clam houses further up the island shine in the new light. Now the clouds in the east are changing to slate color, flecked with white. Cape Anne is a bank of dull clay color. The sun is veiled in a cloud—then emerges from it. The clouds and the ocean are a dark white, mist rising everywhere from the smooth waves. Now the fog is lifting from the land; spires and hills back from the sea are beginning to brighten in the sunlight. The white sheet is removed from Plum Island, and the island glows like an emerald. Castle hill on the right, across Ipswich river, is now a gem of perfect beauty; every spire of grass on it showing its deep green.

"A little time since I saw movement in the reflections of the cattle on Great Neck; and this moment my ears are filled with a melancholy crying of calves, and the noise of gunners blazing on the beach. But far above all meaner sounds, I hear the roar of the surf, as it begins to sound heavily right and left, all along outside Plum Island, and on Ipswich beach toward the Cape."

"We are going to have a rainy day," said Cephas, "and it will be just the weather to walk to Mount Anne. There is no comfort in this world so solid as an all day walk in a pouring rain. Let's try it."

"Agreed. There is nothing dry to me in a rain. I'd as soon do it as not," I answered, well remembering many such days of unmixed enjoyment in a mixture of mud and water.

"A deluge puts a man to practical thinking," continued Cephas, "and it nourishes a feeling of independence, so long as he is not washed away by it. It does one good to war with the elements, or what is better to take what comes and keep the peace. He who walks in the rain is solitary, and has strong purpose."

First strapping my knapsack, we put on rubber suits, shouldered our packs and started for Mount Anne. We were not far on the road before the rain came down,—a perfect torrent all day and the first part of the night.

"Why don't you do as the great inventors have done, and bring a new thought into the world," I asked just before the rain began. "Can there be written no book that will make an era in society to mark dates from? Aim high, as the gunners do. Aim high, and you may hit mediocrity. Aim at mediocrity, and you will shoot below it. Elevate your aim if you will strike a distant mark."

After waiting sometime for this shot to take effect, I began again,—

“Self respect leads us, even in discouraged hours, to believe that we can become more than we are. Have we no latent forces? If we hope to wield royal powers in the future life we ought now to assert ourselves, and take possession of no small section of this world and of several generations of time by our influence. Woe is me, if I can get no respectable hold on this planet.”

But even this sally did not draw fire. Cephas walked on in silence. I also was silent. After the rain had fallen enough to thoroughly wet the ground, my companion made answer:—

“The most worthy thing to aim for is the perfection of one’s own character; and that can best be reached by a faithful discharge of present duties. A man who would be noble will find stimulus enough in trying to compete with himself,—to make every day better than the day before it. To do my work as well as I can, and every day better, is all I want. My success is so private that I cannot be upset in my plans, except through physical indisposition; and even days of illness are of use in making a perfect life.”

Thinking it highly probable that now he had begun to talk, he would no more quit till a change of weather, I opened up on the main business of the day;—

“The most innocent air-castle possible is that of building a posthumous reputation. Even though you modestly work among your own people, you are at liberty to make as good sermons as you can for your people. But if your ideas are extraordinarily good and exceedingly well put, the next generation will need

them as much as this one does. Thought fit for the best minds, choicely expressed, will be of use in a hundred years from now, as much as today. You ought to live and die in the firm belief that your 'remains' will be useful ; and though the rag-man shall buy them the day after the funeral, you will never stop praising God in Heaven, to halloo at the paper-maker on the earth, who is making pulp of your old sermons. To dream of posthumous fame is a safe outlet for the energies of the most ambitious ; and the dream may comfort many a poor fellow, who is spending nights and days in skimming and churning the cream of his studies to make butter for —"

— "Or setting curds to make literary cheese, very green and very strong, for coming ages," interrupted Cephas, who could not stand any allusion to bad butter and mouldy cheese in such connection.

Recovering my equanimity, I went on again,— "How I despise the ringing of human applause in the living ear ; but the ear of a dead man is not sensitive ; and the ear of an angel is in better business than that of listening to the fame of earth."

"Of all the men on the face of the earth," said Cephas, as he punched me with his walking stick, "I wonder if you have turned prophet. You, who have always been hankering after vain reports of your own reputation, and longing to hear good things about yourself ! And now you talk like a philosopher, as though it was all a vain show, and you would modestly get into your grave for fear you should hear some one speak

well of you. I should think you had stolen all the ideas I ever had ; for you know I have always been preaching up the doctrine of living obscurely, and coming to some grand fame after death."

"Well, Cephas, that is just what I want to know frankly," I answered. "I half suspected it, and now I want to know all about it. I have been stealing your ideas, to see whether you would claim the property. For my part, I certainly believe that if a man goes through this life without winning a great reputation, it is precious little he will have of it when he is dead. And if you are one of the stupids, who expect to thrust asinine ears out of the grave to hear that your literary fame is filling all the earth, I want to know it. Come, out with it honestly."

And, hereupon, I punched him with the muddy end of my walking stick. We wheeled out of the road, and came to rest in a grove of hemlocks ; and there lunched on hard-bread and raisins. I tried, in a feeble manner, to tease my friend into some frank confession of his longings for future fame. For I knew myself to be so thoroughly infatuated with ambitious schemes to gain some notoriety in my lifetime, that I thought I should take comfort in knowing Cephas had so much weakness about him, as to seek that dead, which I would have in life. Rather, if I could get such confession out of him, I might have something to fling back when he should next torture me with an address on the vanity of earthly ambition. Accordingly, I reminded him of what he had said when we were boys, and what

he had said when I first found out about the Old Red Trunk in the Island Home. But I could wring from him no other confession than this: that he would do his daily work so well, and with such planning, that his sermons—becoming fewer year by year—should contain his best thinking, concentrated, and put into his best style,—with some hope that a part of them might be thought worthy of printing and using by some Dryadust Tract Society after his demise.

“What makes you talk about sermons?” said I, as we began our walk again. “Why not try some fresh field for authorship?”

“Fresh?” answered Cephas. “Fresh? To make good sermons would be the most refreshing thing on this planet. The making of first class sermons is a business not yet overdone. ‘Mr. Webster, is the profession of the law crowded?’ ‘There is room enough up stairs,’ replied the man of Marshfield.

“The upper shelf, where stand the classics of the pulpit can contain a few more books; and if you are ambitious in your business, as you claim to be, I would like to have you try to make some of the best sermons in the English language. You need not move out of your parish to do it. The names of South and Jeremy Taylor were once no better known than yours. And Jeremy Taylor’s best work was done in a very obscure community. You had better keep to your sermons, rather than to be always ‘hankering for a valise and a railroad ticket.’ You have been a carpet bagger long enough. Sermons, which bore the popular mind in

small parishes, augur no good for the future fame of the preacher. If you will seek the highest kind of authorship, I advise you to quit your literary projects, and stick to your business in snugly meeting the wants of your people. By parochial work and knowing your men, and by hard hours in the study, and by prayer for wisdom, and by study of the style of the Bible and books that will live forever, you may be able to make a few sermons which your own townsmen will not willingly let die. Whether all the world will rise up and object to having your barrel of sermons buried with you, like the weapons of an Indian warrior, need not be asked in your lifetime."

It being my turn to be silent I made no reply, knowing that Cephas would continue to throw cold water on all my ambitions, dripping like the rain. After we had walked on about a mile with the storm beating against us most furiously, Cephas, being ahead, slacked up a little when the rain did, and expressed himself thus:—

"How can any man dream of posthumous fame, even the conquest of a handful of his own townsmen after he is gone, unless he himself has led a rare life? I can, however, imagine that the pastor of a rural parish—with some leisure for the careful study of his people and his books and much leisure for prayer and opening the Scriptures—may learn somehow to adapt the truth to the men about him, and secure the interest of farmers and mechanics and tradesmen in the most vital truths, and thus arouse his whole community by the greatest ideas which can enter the human mind,—till his people seem to be eye witnesses of those things

which concern the children of immortality. The very truths and methods and style, by which he gets such hold on his townsmen, will be likely to influence men elsewhere and in other generations. Human nature is substantially the same in all ages. Upon this axiom rests the only possibility of permanent literary power. One may tickle the fancy of a class of ill proportioned minds, but he who meets the wants of man will abide forever. Those truths which relate to our inner life and the deepest wants of the race are the most abiding. If it were possible to make sermons, which fairly set forth the truth, interesting to the masses of men, they would assume rank as the most permanent kind of literature.

“Socrates dwells with us today, and will never lose his influence upon the human race, because he is forever conversing with unequalled skill upon some of those topics which every thoughtful man is always turning over in his own mind. Whoever will be wise and learn to separate the true from the false in his mental conceptions, must be quickened by the questionings of the ancient Greek. Looking into those immortal dialogues, the students of every age will behold the kind of work, which they themselves must do before it can be said that their minds are well disciplined.*

*NOTE. — “The method of Socrates survives still in some of the dialogues of Plato, and is a process of eternal value and universal application. There is no man whose notions have not been first got together by spontaneous, unartificial associations, resting upon forgotten particulars, blending together disparities and inconsis-

So all writers upon religious themes have in hand problems, which every truly thoughtful man in every age will study for himself. Those books, therefore, upon these topics, which are most profound and readable, clear, concise and helpful, are the ones into which the best minds will always delight to look, since these themes are undying as the human race. If a writer knows men, knows the truth, and knows the style fit for the truth and for men, he ought, by a wise choice of subjects and by the concentration of all his energies upon them, to prepare something which will suitably set forth the highest truths, and leave a worthy legacy to those who come after him. One man who gives himself heartily to preparing,—what shall be in substance if not in form,—sermons of as high an order as he can, may elevate the standard of sermon making throughout the countries where the English tongue will be used. Certain men have done this. To do this, the preacher need not occupy a commanding position ; but to do this he must be diligent and faithful and of noble soul in the use of his hours, wherever he may happen to be."

When we came to our noonday halt, it was in a deserted barn not far from the public road. We found a place ten feet square where the roof did not leak, and there lunched.

tencies, and having in his mind old and familiar phrases and oracular propositions of which he has never rendered to himself an account ; and there is no man who has not found it a necessary branch of self-education to break up, analyze and reconstruct these ancient mental compounds."—*Grote*.

XXI

MORE RAIN.

WHAT! More rain? The shower preceding has been very gentle compared with the deluge to come!

“Perhaps I have not dealt wisely in uncorking Cephas upon the topic in hand; but a ‘continual dropping in a rainy day’ and Cephas are alike.” So thought I to myself when Cephas began again as soon as lunch was over, and poured out floods of talk all the afternoon.

“When as students we search through libraries,” said this day-dreamer, “seeking to become acquainted with the most thoughtful men of this age and all ages, seeking everywhere to find the elements of permanent literary power, we cannot conceal it from ourselves that there are comparatively few books which will be widely popular in the coming years. Some books are so full of thought, beautifully and powerfully expressed, that they will be always favorites with the great army of students, a regiment of whom will cross this globe in every generation to come; there are other books which will be searched by careful students for a few important

ideas amid a heap of verbiage. At this period of the world, there is still room enough for those who aim to do the best things. It is not true that every generation supplies itself with its own books. If the truth is once spoken in a style that cannot be well surpassed, it will stand. Those truths which pertain to the interior life of the soul are as abiding as the soul itself; and a book that is very rich in its expressions of the most vital truth will live; how long, will depend on its style.

"There was a time long ages since, in which a few writers were so simple minded as to take great pains in composition, writing again and again the same matter, spending long years in elaborating small books, and we are glad to read them to-day; while many books, which have thought in them of much greater importance, we pile in the dust of our topmost shelves, because their authors were careless in composition. He who is careless in style is careless of posterity. By this test it can be easily seen how many writers of this age will live. We ask at first whether they utter anything worth keeping in the world more than a few days? And if they have uttered truths of permanent value, we ask whether their words are sufficiently attractive to stand. I believe that there are many country parsons who can, if they will, greatly enlarge their parishes by prayer to the God of Wisdom, by deep searching of the Word from heaven, by hard thinking and very careful writing.

"Is it said that there are already too many books in the world? This is entirely a mistake; there are very

few books in the world. For one or two thousand dollars, there can be bought copies of all the books that will be valuable to the human race in five hundred years from now. Many more will be valuable to the student of social science; but the bulk of the race will care nothing for them in their present form. Men sometimes bemoan the hard lot of future students, as if they would be bound to read any considerable part of the printed and bound paper that now sells under the name of literature. Concerning most of the stuff, the future students will feel much as we do respecting the doings of the creatures that crowded the globe before Adam.

There is competition enough in making 'current literature,' but very little in making books for the future. If any person is particularly ambitious in this line, the way is open, or he can open it. He will not write books that will crowd the market, or make him a great name; but he may secure a few thoughtful readers if he takes pains enough."

"Well, Cephas," said I, stepping out into the mud once more, "you speak as though a man could sit down in a very business-like manner, and say to himself,—'Go to, let us manufacture a posthumous reputation. We can turn out immortal books if we plan for it, as readily as our neighbor can make shoes.'

"Now I have always supposed that the great thinkers whose works will stand through the ages, thought little about having a great influence. They did not plan for it, any more than Shakespeare did; who made his plays

to get a living, not for fame. These men are great because they were born so. They did not sit down and make up their future fame as my grandmother sits down to knit stockings, having a fixed rule for turning the heel and narrowing at the toes."

"Neither, my friend," said Cephas, "did one of those gentlemen sit down and say to himself,—'I am the flower and fruit of all the ages. The centuries have been waiting for me.'

"No, Edward, you are altogether mistaken. They did not plan to make future fame, or take the fame for granted. Every day they fulfilled their round of life as well as they could. The conversations in Plato were designed for influence on the Athenians in that hour; and all the skill that could be devised was used by Socrates in the market and in shops. No man was so obscure as to make the philosopher forget to put forth his best powers in conversing with him. To excel himself in conversing, to do it better every day for the sake of improving the men around him, was the aim; and no man on the globe has been found equal to him. Or if any one has been skilled as he, no one has been exactly like him. Every mind develops according to its own law and nature. And though a man's best work may not be absolutely the best in the world, it may be the best of that kind; and may therefore be of permanent interest, as a unique mental fruit. What is wanted, is that a man should have diligence in his present calling; and make the most of it by incessant toil and every attainable help."

Just then we stepped over a wall to go across lots. We were soon tangled in a thicket of alders, and floundering in the swamp from which they sprang. An old hemlock log promised firm footing; but the wet moss and rotten outer fibres gave way when Cephas put his foot upon it, and he involuntarily slipped into deep mud, and then sat down upon the log. And I sat down beside him. Directly, he moved to one end, and I to the other. There we sat, leaning our knapsack-encumbered-backs against some of the large alders. Taking our feet out of the mire, and planting them also upon the old hemlock, we faced each other. Then Cephas began again to read aloud what was written in his mind, as if out of a book.—

“I don’t think, Ned, that it will be necessary for you to write many books in order to become immortal. Homer is not voluminous. The fame of Demosthenes rests upon a few short speeches, which will never cease to be models for all mankind. The great statesmen and pleaders of recent times will be best appreciated in after ages by a few orations and arguments. The divines whose ideas are most compact, and whose style is best fitted to the men of every age, will live in small volumes.

“I tell you frankly, if I could do it, I would make one book upon a topic of general interest to all students in all ages, and would do my work so thoroughly in matter and style that no future reader on that subject would pass it by. I would make one book, which, like the magnetic mountain of Arabian story, would

through all the ages draw to itself the ships of all travelers that pass that way. But I am in perfect despair of attaining such power.

"In my despair, however, I will not do so inconsiderate a thing as to print matter whose immaturity in quality and style is sure to shock me after a twelve month. You sometimes tell me, Ned, that you must say your say now or never. But the world can wait for you to think it over a little more, and improve your style. Things indifferent can be said as well one time as another. What relates to current events must be said in the moment,—as a man might send printed directions to his boy to put up the bars. And it is true that one may get some reputation for hitting the nail on the head in printed matter on current topics, and for saying pleasant words on things indifferent. But he who is looking for more permanent power can well afford to wait. As the years pass, iniquity will still prevail; and a strong book published ten years hence may be better than a feeble book published today. Satan is more offended by solid shot than by pith balls.

"Print when you get ready; but be sure that you are as nearly ready as you can reasonably expect to be, or that the exigencies of the time demand your extempore effort. Hit right and left as may seem wise in the battle of papers and magazines and books today; but as to future fame, if that is what you want, you had better think little about it, only make certain to concentrate your best thinking into a few sentences, and publish little and late.

“One’s mind is not likely to mature so perfectly as to leave nothing to be mended as the years advance. Keep your manuscripts out of type as long as possible. You may get new light, and new method of displaying it. Jonathan Edwards and Augustine and Luther, I suspect, laugh or even weep, today, over some of the expressions now stereotyped and circulating on the earth under their names. Do all you can toward mending your papers,—lest the printers shame you, age after age in the heavens. If the glorified saints have any work to do as ministering spirits in this world, nearly half the business of some of them must be in stirring up authors to controvert the books said saints put into print while in the flesh. I should be rather ashamed of you, Edward, if, a hundred years from now, you should come to me, and say,—

“‘Cephas, Cephas, I wish you would go down to the coast of Cape Anne, and get somebody to print a book in opposition to the bad theology and worse logic and intolerable rhetoric which I printed when I was pastor in those parts; and which I see is still quoted by some of my few admirers.’

“No, Edward, I advise you to keep out of print all you can. You may want to controvert your own opinions, modify your statements, and certainly to mend your style, from four hundred to a thousand times before you die. Don’t print. Don’t.”

“I wont, if you’ll emigrate,” said I, rising, stretching my legs and adjusting my pack, ready for another heroic struggle to get out of the alder swamp. But in

my attempt to cross a sluggish brook on stepping stones, a little further on, I slipped and went into the water over my rubber boots. Cephas stood upon the bank beyond, philosophizing thus:—

“Most students are launched into the seething current of life before they are educated. They do not, after that, get time to extend the range of their studies. Perhaps a pastor is a pithy paragraph writer for newspapers; and he may do vast good in that way. But the hours are passing, and life itself will soon slip away; and the preacher is yet ignorant of a great range of studies which might aid him in sermon making. He who will secure the most permanent power must be willing to forego the more transient. The sermon maker has enough to do: let others do their work—the work needed for the current wants of the reading world; there are enough who can do it, and do it well, and who will never do his work: the sermon maker must stand to his guns, let who will fire squibs and pistols, and do sharp shooting. Let him learn all the good gifts of style, and put his best thoughts into shape for his people. If they are worthy, the printers and readers will be glad of his papers when he has done his best to perfect them.”

All that afternoon and early evening we talked. Cephas told me more than I had known concerning his pigeon holes and plans of study; of his entering upon long years of toil in definite lines of work. I could see, however, that he did not rely mainly upon any un-

couth cramming process, or upon his increasing skill in composition. His mind was fixed upon gaining the highest possible power by the inspiring presence of God in all his studies.

Cephas' notions of sermon making were not all conformed to the Blair or Edwardean models. He meant by the word sermon merely an interesting and effective talk on religion. Bound to make such talks interesting anyhow, he worked in all the religion he could on that basis. The short fragmentary treatment of Christian themes in the pulpit fell so far short of the dignity of complete treatises that my friend preferred to call them mere talks. I do not know but his ideal of sermon making was to have thoroughly live conversations on religion; to use the dramatic form and every form possible to catch men's attention, and keep it, and to enforce the truth. He dwelt much on the Bible style of presenting religious themes,—doctrinal sermons like the book of Romans rarely, but doctrine everywhere, in every shape, whether biography, history, poetry, type, drama, epistle, or anecdote. With this wide definition of the sermon, he believed sermon making a good business to be in for preparing the best kind of literature. The work of so presenting religious truth to the common mind as to make it thoroughly attractive as well as quickening, is a work worthy the highest ambition for literary distinction; offering due reward to those who desire large influence in meeting the highest wants of man.

To make sermons sound on natural science and

social questions as well as on theology ; warm with the love of God to man ; with quick sympathy for all that is human ; fervid in claiming man's repentance and faith,—this kind of work is of unsurpassed dignity ; and in it the pastor may advance to the very first rank of literary power. To imbue sermons with the greatest degree of merit in range, substance, structure, and style, is to do much toward putting into the world a distinctive religious literature, which will carry the day against all antagonist writings. If unbelief makes good use of the pen, it is a standing scandal upon our faith if Christian themes cannot be thoroughly popularized in print. And while it is true that religious writings are — beyond all comparison — popularly in the lead of those distinctly irreligious, yet the making of first class Christian literature, which will abide through the ages, is a work not overdone.

When Cephas came round again to this point that the field is still open, I could see, by his tone, intensity of speech and kindling eye, that he had some hope, by forty years of hard toiling and praying, he might be useful to some who should come after him.

“Posthumous influence!” quoth he, “not a bad thing to dream about after all,—to dream about, while working to the utmost for one's own people today.”

This was said by the roaring fire we had made at the side of a big boulder on top of Mount Anne. We were shut off from the wind ; the storm was abating ; and we had dried a sufficient space to make ourselves comfortable under the shelter we had erected.

At this particular point I heard a cracking in the bushes at our backs, and a deep bass sound like that of an Indian,—

“Ugh!”

Turning that way, I saw, disentangling himself from a thicket, the huge frame of the Houlton Giant.

I dreaded him more than any man in Essex county. For, in the first place, he was the greatest tramp in the country. His bill for shoe leather exceeded all his other family expenses. With him, I was a snail. He was always stirring me up to go somewhere, and to go quickly. Many a time he has taken me out of a quiet parlor, merely to sit in the sun on a hot day, in the midst of dust intolerable, overlooking some dirty back street in an unclean city. He could not be easy to sit down to converse in a house. If I walked with him by the side of the sea, he would, as soon as we were comfortably seated upon some promontory, at once rise and suggest that we walk to another headland half a mile off, and he would not be easy until I moved; and he would not be easy then.

Plodding upon his farm, and caring for his hens and cow and cosset, or tramping through the country, he had ideas of the order of Webster and Milton, the well-proportioned mind of the one and the poetic fancy of the other. I can never express the wonder with which I looked upon that man. If he had been trained in the schools, and been placed in a social position calling out his energies, I believe he would have filled the world with his fame. He was content to live nobly;

and his life was to me the finest poem in the world, his simple piety to me more eloquent than all preachers. He imparted a certain dignity to the every day employments of life. When he was doing chores about his place, he said he sometimes thought this was what he was for. He believed this was the way the old prophets did: they moved about their land, tilling the soil, and working with oxen; and when they spoke for God, it was to them a burden to be lifted and borne, the burden of the Lord. With his long flowing black hair, he seemed like a veritable prophet. I could hardly bear it to be with this man; he so shamed me in my low plane of living. When his full eyes fastened upon me I thought nothing in my soul could be concealed.

This night was one of his nights of power; and it was as if Mount Anne had become Olympus. The writings of the noblest men, he had upon his tongue's end; and yet there was nothing unworthy in his speech. The words of Plato and Milton did not seem so much quotations, as the natural expression of his own thoughts; and his spirit was habitually dwelling in that region where he had the best of earth for his companions. We had an ambrosial night. A little before daybreak he walked away into the darkness; and I never saw him again. He perished by the fall of a tower in a foreign country.

XXII.

MOUNT ANNE.

ROUSING up early in the morning under a clear sky, I turned over upon my hard bed, saying, —
“According to your method, Cephas, Milton might have tinkered on *Paradise Lost* till this time, and he never would have been done. For my part I am glad he published it in his life time, before it was perfected to death and all the inspiration taken out of it. I believe with Carlyle, that while no one can make a mathematical square, yet any respectable carpenter can make one that is square enough. I don't believe in this filing away all your life on a few sermons.”

“Well, I do suppose,” said Cephas, yawning, “that if the stupids who cleaned up Milton's house after he was dead, had found the unpublished manuscript of *Paradise Lost*, they would have tucked it into the ash hole; and the noblest devil who ever trod this earth would have smothered there, if a printer's devil had not happened to pull him out. Four-legged vermin, hunting after a bone in that dark hole, would have taken those lines, —

‘Hail holy Light,’ &c.
and made them into a mouse nest.”

"If you don't print before you die," I answered, "I'll take your pigeon holes, and sell them for dove cotes. One hundred and fifty thousand bits of paper, which you call ideas, I will tie up into kite tails, and ship them to China, where everybody raises a kite once a year."

"That is all they would be fit for, if I should print them now," said Cephas. "What is the use of my offering to tract societies material that ought to go up on the next high wind? If I can't reduce my rag paper to pulp, and make fair pages out of it, I am content you should take my sermons, and furnish all the boys in creation with stuff for steering kites."

"I have noticed, Cephas," I answered, "that the immortal speeches and writings of former times have been for immediate use. I never heard that any part of Milton's prose works, or that the speeches of Demosthenes were made for posterity. There was present business to be done. 'Glittering generalities' do not make up well for coming generations. If you don't strike hard and hot in the present living issues, your blows will never echo down the aisles of the future. Unless the men of this age feel your power, the next age will not care whether you left any unpublished manuscripts."

"Whew! whew!" was the only reply I heard. Looking in the direction of the sound, I saw the posthumous fame man blowing at a mosquito; which was trying hard to effect an entrance into the breathing hole

Cephas had left in his bed-covering. It is vexatious that minds panting after immortality should become victims to the contemptible details of bodily convenience. But that musical vampire took off our attention, and we thought nothing more of posthumous fame till after breakfast.

I kindled the fire, and Cephas made spruce tea to soak our hard bread, and cooked eggs in a birch bark kettle. We then went strolling about the bald head of Mount Anne. I placed my feet in the hoof-prints made by some gigantic horse of former ages ; deciphered the lettering inscribed in the register of this out-door hotel ; examined the marks left by the coast survey ; and then looked at the leaves just below the crest as they glistened in the sunlight. *I imagined how the forest would look when maple, beech, and oak put on their gay colors, in the midst of sober evergreens, with solitary crags showing their heads among the tree tops.

On either hand, in the distance, were seen vast tracts of pine. Northeast, the view stretches away to Pigeon Hill, and the highlands back of Rockport ; and, on the south, to the high crown of the hill at Norman's Woe, and the naked ridges back of Magnolia. Southwest and west, the forest hides all the country toward Wenham and Beverly. The Blue Hills, and the heights of Stoneham and Lexington, rise in the distance. More dimly, further west and northwest, appear Wachusett, Monadnock, the hills of Francestown, and the Uncanoonucks, with a wide area of intervening country. Turning toward the sea, the coast line can be

followed from Maine to the south shore of Massachusetts Bay.

"Did you ever make a careful estimate," I asked, turning to Cephas, "of the immense number of squirrels and woodchucks and rattlesnakes this area of forest is capable of sustaining?"

"No," he answered. "But I have here in my pocket, a very careful estimate of the number of the *genus homo* the western hemisphere will support; and it is just thirty-six hundred millions. And I have also the documents which show that, in a hundred years from now, more than eight hundred millions of people will be speaking the English language. And while I have no idea that more than four hundred millions of them will care anything about reading my posthumous works,—yet I have concluded to do all I can to make my writings so good, that every well-regulated family will want them in the house. I kept awake an hour after you went to sleep last night, thinking how I could write something so interesting as to keep the young folks of the next generation sitting up nights to read my books.

"Did you never stop in the midst of all your parish cares, and dream about the populations which will crowd the continents of the future? Steam power and water power will everywhere drive the wheels of industry. And who will set up thinking mills? Factories are not common for making "A. 1. Extra Finish" books. A good part of the finish is put into the paper and binding."

"The streams on which most thinking mills are

erected," I replied, "are not equal to more than one or two horse power, and dry half the year at that. You talk as though a man could go into the business, much as he would make shingles."

Cephas drew from his pocket a copy of the Psalms, and pointed me to the text,—“All my springs are in Thee.”

“He who builds on this, will never fail,” was the comment. “Unless a mill is built hard by the Divine resources, and is driven by the very power of the Highest, little success can be counted on.”

“Can you count on certain success in this way?” I asked. “Only think how many pious blockheads have lumbered up the shelves of libraries. Here is an appeal now, for more money to build more roof, to keep more of their books from perishing by exposure to the weather on the street stalls of the venders of unsalable books. Libraries are warehouses for gathering papermakers’ stock, never to be utilized. And you will work day and night all your life, and dream of fame,—merely to add a couple of pounds weight to the heavy material, that is already bending the long shelves in the theological attic of some big library. For my part I would rather be a tramp, and wear out sole leather.”

Cephas seemed to fall in readily with this last suggestion. We accordingly rolled up our luggage, shouldered the packs, and started for Coffin’s beach. On our way, Cephas was full of missionary talk; he was looking, day by day, for some providence which would

take him out of New England. To work in the border country, to help mould the life of new states and territories, was what he was always sighing for. And yet his health was so wretched, that he had to abstain from very intense work in his own parish, and from all outside labor in the way of church activities and social reform. He had to tread an even path to live out his years.

"Some days," he said, "I pray for a compensation for all my bodily infirmities. As Samson of old prayed,—‘O Lord, avenge me of mine eyes,’—I ask,—

“‘O Lord, avenge me of my body: as I would have been a home missionary, make my books missionaries, to be read in many homes on the border: as I would have worked most intensely for the spiritual good of many people, allowing no rest day nor night till they should be born anew in Christ Jesus; so, make my printed sermons powerful for the salvation of men.’—

"I confess, however, that I expect little in this direction. I can not make this prayer in faith. It is only an aspiration by which I relieve my mind, in hours of earnest struggling with my fate.

"Yet I cannot help envying that New England pastor, who will by his writings preach over against Buddha and Confucius in their own countries. ‘Doddridge’s Rise and Progress’ is leading men to God in Armeno-Turkish. Every man to his work: some are going forth to conquer the continents for Christ; some are sitting in quiet studies preparing a literature, which will be read by every Christian people.

“Ned, did you never go into the woods to lie down, and weep and pray for the descent of the Quickening Spirit upon distant islands and dark populations? If you have, and if you must nurse your body most carefully day by day, you know what it is to be consumed with longing for so much skill in writing, as will make your words a missionary force after your hand has crumbled in dust.”

Little by little, as we made our way over the narrow road, I was made acquainted with my friend's inner life, as I had not known it before. With unutterable desire he was now living mainly for one purpose. Despairing of going forth himself to mingle in the world's wide battle, he was doing as well as he could in his quiet parish; but all the energy he could put to it was given to careful writing,—primarily to meet the wants of his own people and not without hope that some of his pages might find their way into missionary fields.—In the bright dawning of the days of peace just before us, a warm and glowing Christian literature will find an increasing number of readers; and is it folly to pray that one's words may go forth to the ends of the world, and be read by distant generations of men?—It is wise at least to lead so noble a life that holy men, coming after, may not be ashamed of our memory.—In such talk we whiled away the journey. To write books for boys, to make the truth attractive to young men, was claimed to be the best business in this world.

“If I could write books which would reach thought-

ful lads and lasses of fourteen and sixteen, I would not exchange influence with any one," said Cephas, just as we began to feel the hard floor of the beach under our feet. "When you were a child, inquiring the way of life and darkly stumbling, you know the books that seized upon you with strong hand. I remember your first contact with John Foster; and the curious subtle thoughtfulness of a nameless writer, so obscure and unpractical that he has had no readers,—and yet whose two hundred pages gave a new turn to your life. Future Franklins will rise, ready to confess the moulding power of simple essays, like those of Cotton Mather. Large minded boys may be led to higher aspirations and broader sympathies by unpretending books. To aid in forming the character of one noble child is worth a life time of labor. To leave such an endowment for young men is like founding colleges. An idea is a thing of life, to grow when your body is in the dust, to flourish when your memory has passed away, to rise daily with new vigor after the decay of many a generation."

After crossing the ferry to Squam, we walked down the rocky ridge toward Bayview, and struck through the woods to Pigeon Cove. All that day, we talked on such themes as made that walk most memorable in my own mental history.

My work today, in writing this chapter, finds me at Pigeon Cove, within a few rods of the place where we slept that night. We were in a field on the brink of the rock bound shore. I am sitting in the shadow

of a brine washed ledge with my feet just above the still waters. In my portfolio I find certain papers in Cephas' handwriting, which are, properly, the continuation of the talk we had that day.

"It is no small part of my regular business, day by day, to go into deep solitude that I may plead with God and study the Word,—if by such means I may gain the heavenly wisdom, and know the secret places of power. Is it a vain thing that I have shed so many tears over the map and over God's Word, as I have been crying mightily unto Him upon great rocks in wide forests, in secluded valleys, upon mountain slopes, and by the side of the sea? When I have been praying for my people, and for pagans, and for the unborn populations of the world, I have dared to desire to do something to bring in the kingdom,—even though it be only to condense my life purposes into a few words, which may act as seed thoughts in the minds of a handful of young men in after times, that through them I may gain some friends for Christ in later ages of the world. If by thirty or forty years of labor and unceasing supplication for wisdom and power, I could write one or two books which wide awake lads would read * * * ."

Here ends the paper. I find by such memoranda, that hours together were spent in pleading with God upon the topics here indicated. Cephas' studies were carried on in the secret places of prayer ; as if from the very shadow of the Almighty were to go forth his appeals to his own people and all whom he might

reach. He hoped that the Lord might use him, and allow him to speak more wisely than he knew, half unconscious of the glory of the message.

“What may we not look for,” says this note book, “in our new alliance with Jehovah? He who walks with God walks in the way of unusual power. The solitary places of our country parishes may be made glad by revelations from on High. Hill-side paths or homely pastures; tangled woodlands and wild meadows; dreary walks on prairies or amid the corn lands and grazing fields, or under the hay stacks,—may be the places where God will show His truth to his own chosen, and where, from day to day, may rise, with unspeakable earnestness, the prayer of the psalmist,—O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, thy power to every one that is to come.”

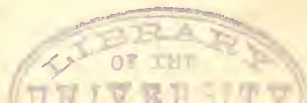
If the phantom of future fame flitted at times before the eyes of my friend, he followed it nobly, seeking to walk in a strength not his own.

XXIII.

MOQUELUMNE HILL.

THE Spring following our Mount Anne bivouac, Cephas was invited to labor in California, under circumstances which gave him strong hope that he could stand to it. He had been suffering a great deal from nervous difficulties ; and he proposed spending some months in the Sierra before taking up his new work.

In the autumn I also went to California, and remained there a part of the winter. When I arrived, Cephas had not yet returned from the mountains. Little had been heard from him. His health, at the first seemed to improve ; although he had alluded to some bad symptoms about his head. Still, his friends were confidently looking forward to his speedy return. My business took me into the hill country. Within a week, I had the misfortune to sprain my ankle, in jumping a fence ; and then made it the worse by an enforced horseback ride of ten miles after the accident. I was, therefore, laid up several weeks ; and found in a Christian home in Moquelumne Hill a refuge so comfortable that I was glad to be an invalid.



My time was divided between writing, showering my foot, lying down on a board in the sunny garden, tending my landlady's baby, and assisting a little at the sink, from which place, however, I was discharged as incompetent.

With one crutch and a hoe handle, I managed to hobble about among the neighbors, devouring sundry turkey dinners, which were quite the rage all the season. I was equal to this business.

Moreover, upon three legs, I climbed all the small hills about the village. There was not a cloud in the sky for thirty days, and this in the season for rain fall. Living out of doors was a constant delight.

One day I ascended a peak on the east of the town. If I remember aright, the sides of the hill had been badly torn by miners; but the top was a paradise of fine pictures. The south overlooks the rough backs of twenty miles of hills, rolling like the ocean in tempest; and on the horizon stretch the flat tops of table mountains. On the north, close beneath me, a sharp slope runs down eight hundred feet to the bed of the Moquelumne river; and across the stream rises a bank as sharp. Beyond this cañon, Bute mountain rears its round head eighteen hundred feet from the river bottom. Around the side of the Bute stretches a water ditch for the gold miners; reaching out northwest for three-fourths of a mile, upon timbers from twenty to eighty feet high. Turning westward, the foot hills sink into the broad Sacramento valley; which upon that day was full of fog, shining like white feathery bil-

lows under the clear and brilliant afternoon sun. Across that cloudy sea, a hundred miles away, Mount Diabolus and the Coast Range peaks lift their heads island-like out of the mist ; and the waves of vapor roll on toward sunset. Toward the east the eye looks over fifty miles of mountain tops, as if over the roughest sea of solid waves ; and in the extreme distance the Sierra Nevada chain rises with many sharp, shining points, whose snows glitter in the western sun, like the battlements of Eden, or some New Jerusalem let down upon the earth.

Sheets of grass land, and gigantic clumps of trees upon the upper part of the northern slope of the hill offered an inviting place of rest ; so that I lay down near the crest, and began straightway to dream. The first thing I concluded was to name this peak Jennie's Mountain. Then I thought of Helen and the lone grave on the crag. My mind turned next to him who had spent so much time with me on the sounding shore of Cape Anne,—wandering as I supposed at that very hour somewhere among the foot-hills of the Sierra. And then I thought over the strange story of my contact with his pursuer in the Essex woods and on the coast. I tried to recall his features.

Raising my eyes suddenly, I saw the man under a tree only a few rods down the slope. There was the detective standing and gazing upon me ! He wore the same old cut of drab cloth, and the wide hat. I marked the same breadth of shoulder and chest, and well-knit frame. In one hand he held a little book ;

and in the other a dirty pipe, which he put to his mouth when our eyes met. His face seemed harder than two or three years before.

Filled with an undefinable dread, yet with a sense of the necessity of finding out his exact errand, I put on my best humor,—

“Halloo, there, I thought you broke your pipe on the Forty-foot Boulder.”

“I did,” he answered with a complete change of countenance, and the most winning eye and voice. “And if you still hate tobacco, I’ll break it again, if you’ll come down here to chat a little.”

Advancing, he pointed to the smouldering remains of a camp fire, under an outcropping rock in the shade of a wide-spreading tree. The spot looked so home-like, that I wondered I had not noticed it before, half concealed as it was by a bunch of shrubs.

“I thought you had once vowed to give up your small vices,” said I, drawing near with awkward steps.

“I gave up vows and took vices again after I left you. I decided to follow a course I knew to be wrong.”

“Are you still following it?”

“Sit down; and we will talk. I have seen no man smile for many a month.”

We sat beside the fire, and began to talk. When he found that I felt kindly, sympathizing with him, recognizing his better nature, that I could be his brother morally, I soon drew forth his story since we parted on board ship in Boston.

He had grown to be much better and much worse ; both the good and the evil in him becoming stronger and fiercely contending, one now the victor, then the other. According to his own account, he had seasons of intense wickedness ; and then would try to amend his life. His small vices, he said, had been resumed ; and they had grown upon him in his last months in London. Under their dominion his higher aspirations had slumbered, and he was more than ever fitted for ill deeds. Cowley's line,—

“God the first garden made, and the first city Cain,”

expressed his idea of the demoralizing influence of city life.

“But did not Cain kill his brother in the country?” I asked.

He started suddenly, as if he saw an ill vision,—and looked searchingly into my eyes ; but seeing me quiet as usual — although I was surprised at his manner, he calmly answered, after a moment's hesitation :

“It is, I suppose, one's own moral purpose, which makes city or country a heaven or a hell.”

His conversation seemed in very marked contrast with that we had on the iron cliffs of Gloucester ; and yet it was substantially the same, the same sudden alternations between hardness and tenderness. His conscience had gathered strength ; but his power to resist it had increased. He appeared to me like one, whose moral nature was constantly re-enforced from without, to check the evil influences he met day by day. As we

conversed, he was very tender ; and sometimes he appeared to be completely broken down by some strange sorrow : again, like the sudden changes on the face of the sea under clouds and winds and old storms, his face and voice would indicate a wickedness which made me almost wish I was not alone with him.

It took me from the early afternoon till past sunset, to get little by little the account I give in a few words. Whenever he grew uncommunicative, I turned the talk to other topics ; and by the power of poetry, of which he was very fond, or merriment, or direct appeal to his moral nature, I soon got him upon the track again.

It appeared that after many months of varied work and monotonous dissipation in London, he was called upon by a former patron in evil work, to catch an insane man wandering in a distant part of the world. He described his employers as being,—the one an intellectual villain of great powers, another a muscular, coarse, fast-lived fellow, and the third a miser ; all three of high rank in society, and perhaps one or two of noble blood. They gave their intended victim the name of the Mad-man ; and said he was corresponding with an heiress. She was so infatuated as to be likely to waste all on him ; although they had intercepted correspondence, and tried in every way to break up the strange spell. It had now become necessary for them, in guarding the estate, to find the wild fellow ; and bring him where his insanity could be proved, and her relation to him could be regulated. And the leader of the trio privately signified that if the Mad-man, who

claimed considerable piety, could be transported to heaven so quietly that no law would ever disturb any party concerned in the matter, it would be more acceptable to them and a great saving of general bother. This hint was emphasized by a substantial gift.

The detective, under these circumstances, undertook to find the crazy man. From the name given, and from what was said of his movements, he concluded that the troublesome insane fellow was none other than the Wild Man he had already tracked from the Azores to the Essex Woods ; and on a little inquiry, he came to believe that the real jewel of which his former employer had been robbed was the heart of his only child.

Coming to America, he learned that the wanderer had not only been to California, as I had before informed him, but returned and gone again. Taking steamer quickly as possible, he found on board a New England clergyman, who professed to be acquainted with my friend ; and who strangely confirmed the Englishman's notion that the man was very often wild and erratic if not insane, and moreover that he was of little account, and had few friends. Upon learning some part of the detective's errand the pastor agreed to aid a little in the search, declaring that such a man ought to be cared for.

The indignation I felt on hearing this story so far, made me almost lose my self-control. For there was something in the manner of the man, which made me almost certain that he was, in some moods, ready for violence ; and I was strongly impressed that some

strange tragedy had actually occurred. But I was mollified a little by his account, given in the most subdued, tender and broken spirit,—of the power this minister gained over him. It seems that the pastor made straight for the foreigner's conscience ; and by a love and sympathy I could hardly imagine, he so won the fellow, that the man told him frankly about his frequent sinnings and half repentings, and his struggles with his own conscience, and even his present hesitation between right doing and wrong. This the man-hunter told me with the tears starting,—

“I hate most ministers, but I love that man as if he he were my brother. Still he never knew the bottom of my heart. I wish I could see him now. I *must* see him before I get out of this country.”

Then he stopped, as if startled by his own words. And nothing I could say or do removed in the least the impressions he must have been gathering from my searching and sometimes suspicious look, and from my lip and brow and the tones in which I spoke. I had shut the door of his lips. When we first began our conversation, I had managed carefully ; but as the truth began to break out that he had been again with dreadful commission on the track of my dearest friend, I could not perfectly manage myself ; and I could not therefore manage him any longer. Vexed with myself, I hobbled down the hillside before daylight was gone. And I thought :—

“My way is my folly. Here I have just left a man whose conscience is aroused, and who has, I verily

believe, done some dreadful deed ; and he longs for an ear into which he can pour his story. Making it my business to deal with men's consciences, I know so little of human nature, and have so little control of myself that I have lost him."

And I remembered Him who loved even His murderers. Throwing myself upon the ground under a thick shrub, I prayed for myself, and for the man on the hill ; but I could not pray for him whom I loved more than life, for I felt that it was too late.

Going to my room I could not rest, and could not eat. With a quick purpose to follow my best impulses rather than consult prudence or law, I filled my voluminous skirt pockets with edibles, and climbed the hill again. The moon, in its second quarter, shone upon the deserted camping place ; and I saw the Englishman's white hat just disappearing a few rods below. I hallooed, and he turned back. His blanket and rifle were packed for travel. He asked if I was alone. Catching at once his point, I broke into a loud laugh, and said,—

"Yes, my friend, I'm not a rascal, if you are. I play no tricks on travelers. Come back, and lunch with me."

When he saw me take a cold chicken from one of my big book-pockets, and draw bread-rolls and a bottle of coffee from the other, he advanced. But I saw that he kept an eye out, so that it was needful for me to proceed with caution. With warm sympathies, good humor, and hearty love for him as I supposed, I won

him little by little, and finally told him frankly that I had suspected him of foul play toward my friend. I said that I was thoroughly ashamed a stray Yankee minister should gain his confidence, while I was unworthy of it.

“Where,” said I, “is the New Testament you had on Cape Anne? Did I see it in your hand as I came up this afternoon?”

Upon this, he produced it,—stabbed almost through by some sharp instrument,—the mark, as he said, of some brawl. Taking it, I said that my Christian love could not be turned aside by any deed of man.

Knowing a cheerful camp-fire to be of prime importance in thawing him out and making us one for the hour, I piled on the stumps and dead limbs till the night was light round about us. We conversed till midnight; and he told me the rest of his story, talking quite freely and connectedly most of the time. The clergyman, it seems, told him to search in the mountains where the Wild Man would wander alone in the summer. And having, as the pursuer had, a thorough taste for mountain adventure, he entered eagerly upon the chase.

He traversed the “silent sea of pines” about the base of peaks whose tops pierce the clouds; and then tracked his victim into the most inaccessible fastnesses of the Sierra, and there hunted him as a wild beast upon the mountains. The cool domes and white towers, pinnacles and spires, obelisks and sharp needles, offered a difficult country. He often found him-

self apparently close upon the Mad-man. And for a long time he tried the plan of coming up with him, hoping, as he said, to persuade him to ship for England; but the wild climber was unapproachable as a mountain goat or eagle. If the detective had doubted whether his game was mad, he came firmly to believe that nothing but insanity or demoniacal possession could enable one to flit about in perfect safety among the most terrific crags and chasms as he did. Indeed, I began myself to think that the wild wanderer must have been truly mad.

The hunter, sleeping night after night amid desolation, disturbed only by the sullen sound of the avalanche, and spending the day in clambering up or down precipices,—almost lost his own reason in the excitement of the chase. He was sometimes led by the promise of speedy success to go too far from his supplies; and in returning would lose the track for a time. His morning walks were often interrupted by the fall of rocks crumbling off the high cliffs, or the loosening of boulders rolling down the mountain side. Toward evening the dark and frowning brows of mountain walls gathered deeper darkness, and he could see the night approaching from the east, and settling down over the deep valleys. Often, when he lay down to rest, the frost began to pry off fragments from abrupt ledges far above him. One night, just before the detective left the mountains, when a short snow-storm was warning him away, he heard the whole range roaring, one sharp peak after another shooting its

avalanche into the depths below. Just before morning a torrent of ice and snow slid swiftly down a smooth granite roof, and rushed off the eaves, over the precipice under which he was lying; but the overhanging of the rock saved him from being buried.

He had, at no point, obtained a very near view of his wild prey; and now, for some time, had so utterly lost the trace, that he began to think the lunatic had perished in the mountains. But as he was moving about on the sharp roofs of the wall of the Ahwahne valley, having now fairly given up the search, he saw the Mad-man sitting upon a spike of granite, which pushed out from the brink. His legs were dangling over the awful abyss; and he sat with a book in his hand, apparently absorbed in it.

“And this,” said he, “was the last time I saw him.”

The latter part of the story had been told with so much nervousness, and hesitation and gloomy anticipation, as if everything was coming to a crisis,—he having his eyes cast down and I mine,—that when he said he had seen my friend no more, I could have shrieked with terror. He was evidently prepared for some sudden revulsion of feeling on my part: for he looked up when I did, and as our eyes met, I thought I never before saw Goth, Vandal, and Hun in modern figure. Perhaps he would have told me more, if, at the critical moment I could have endured it and with loving hand led him on: but how could I love a fiend? I broke down completely, and he held me off,—

“I can tell you no more.”

I think I must have fallen into a stupor: for when I came to myself, I was moving upon his strong back near the bottom of the hill next the town. And he placed me upon the ground tenderly, saying, —

“I am sorry for you. Good night.”

XXIV.

THE LIVE OAKS.

I WAS completely unmanned, and incapable of motion. My only thought was: Have I been spending a day and a night with the murderer of my most intimate friend? I knew nothing; and had no means of proving anything; but I felt satisfied about it. The cold of the night soon pierced me. I went home to sleep through weight of sorrow, and to dream of wild mountains and the hunted man,—and to wake forming ill plans. I thought that in the very early dawning, I would send a few friends to search the country. But with daylight I came to a better purpose; feeling very decidedly and clearly that his aroused conscience would arrest the Englishman sooner than the law could catch him.

I went to the camp again, now deserted; and there prayed for him, and that I myself might have practical wisdom in the circumstances. Returning home I slept some time; and then made my arrangements to go down into the valley that night to reach the coast before next steamer day.

After nightfall, I mounted a pony, rode till the moon

went down, and then for a time went forward in the darkness. I was well down upon the plains toward Stockton, riding among the enormous trees, which standing apart leave open spaces of greensward,—a sight by daylight or moonlight like old English parks long cultivated. By the stars I could still make out the trees in the roadway. But a storm was gathering; and it became so dark, that I could hardly keep the path in the rich, black soil. I turned out into the timber to find a place to sleep a little, that I might with early dawning go forward to the down river boat.

My pony began to shy and stop and snort. Quick as thought, I leaped to the ground upon my sound ankle; and half smothering the nose of my beast, quieted him, and led him back a little. My ears were now filled with sounds of distress, from out the darkness. Little by little, I crept toward the voice; and soon found myself close to a deserted cabin. Within it a man was crying out with shrieks of agony,—

“I killed him, I killed him. He dropped from his perch like a stricken bird.”

And then the man seemed to be pacing rapidly across the room in the darkness. No light shone through the chinks in the wall. He suddenly stood still; and poured out words that sent the blood to my heart and then to my finger tips:—

“I believe there is some one listening.”

And then he answered himself,—“Be still you fool: it was only your own heart beating.”

Then he walked the floor again.—

"Oh! I did not mean to kill him. I was half mad when I did it. I did not mean to kill him: no, not with my rifle."

And he stood still:—

"Yes, you did: you meant to shoot so near, that he would fall, through sudden alarm."

Then I heard a sharp cry:—

"What! is that you, mother? Are you praying for me yet? Old gray haired woman, I thought you were dead long ago."

And he flung himself upon the floor: then rose and walked calmly, saying,—

"Yes, I saw from the valley below his body far up the cliff, half hanging on a shelf of rock."

Next, he changed his posture, and I heard him praying,—

"O God of my mother!"

But that was all he could say; and he said it over many times in a quiet voice as if he was at rest. Immediately he started up again with a wild cry,—

"I wish God was not so far off. I wish I could see Christ. If He would only come and put his hand on me, and love me, I would tell him all."

Then he was silent: but soon I heard the voice of prayer,—

"Oh, my sympathizing Saviour, I believe in you; because my mother did, and because the pastor did on board ship. He was the only one who has loved me since I was a little child. And he told me that you loved me. I believe him: and I believe you.—Now, I

want to tell you all about it. Ever since I refused to pray with my mother,—I have been worse and worse ; till now my hands are red.”

And then he rose and shrieked,—

“My hands are red! My hands are red!”

After a moment, he became suddenly still, as if listening ; for he whispered,—

“Some one must have heard me. I must get out of this.”

He struck a light. And I crept away, nimbly as I could. My whole frame so trembled with excitement, that I felt no more fit to face him than a babe would be ready to contend with a tiger. I am ashamed ; but I went away. I could not see that man again. It was a little before day break, and the darkness was very dense ; but I found the road, and moved on toward Stockton. After going a long distance, the full light now streaming from the east, I sat down under a big oak, determined that I would give up the boat that day, and seek for the stained Englishman : who was, I began to fear, going mad through the accusations of conscience. Giving my horse a long tether, he began grazing. I kindled a little fire, and, after breaking my fast, leaned against the oak, and read here and there in the Gospels. Prostrate upon my face, I prayed long for the miserable man in the cabin ; and that I might have grace and energy to meet him, and wisdom to guide him.—

“I ought to have had the nerve and heart, to have met the man on the lonely threshold, with open arms and with the name of a loving Christ.”

"Yes, I think you ought," said a voice close beside me.

And looking up, I saw the man standing with pack and rifle.

"You stood by the old cabin, last night," said he. "I found your trail."

"I ought to have broken in upon you, or met you at the door," I answered.

"It is well you did not; for I was in a strange mood then. You would have been hardly safe."

"I would have met you with the name that is above every name, and God's own word of full forgiveness."

"Yes, I know it all,—the old story. But I am not ready for that. I will first meet human law; then see if there is any divine mercy."

I began opening my Testament; but he interrupted me:—

"I do not believe that you and I can get on together. Your Christian love is too easily turned away from such a fellow as I am. Your best thoughts seem to be second thoughts, too late. I want to talk with a man whose first impulses are always warm towards the worst of men. I must leave you now. If I do not find the Yankee minister, I may send for you when I am once safely housed by justice."

Hastily waving his hand,—I saw him no more.

Unexpected business occupied me in San Francisco, till ship after ship steamed for Panama. But on the day I left the country, I went to the top of Telegraph Hill

to take one more look at the wonderful panorama there unfolded ; and whom should I see but my wild, hunted, slain, insane friend, enjoying the prospect hugely. I had already heard of his safety. With the most hearty laugh, he amused me for five minutes,—telling what a chase he had led the villain ; and how,—seeing him about to fire, he dropped off his seat to a ledge below, knowing that the huntsman was not sure footed and cool headed enough to come to the edge to search for him. He was about to tell me more, and to tell me of his new projects of work ; but he was suddenly called away by a messenger. And, first leaving a letter full of questions, and some account of my adventures with his pursuer,—I sailed for the East without seeing Cephas again.

Next morning, going early on deck, I saw the Englishman, sitting well forward, looking over his dagger-pierced Testament ; and when he slowly turned his face, not yet seeing me, I saw that he had been weeping. I instantly walked that way, saying, in a kind but half jocular voice :—

“Good morning, Sir. I am glad to meet you. I see you are not hanged yet ; and I met your Mad-man yesterday, all the better for his trip to the mountains.”

For a moment, his face kindled with a smile, and then it relapsed into a settled sadness, which he kept all the voyage. I learned that when he left the Live Oaks he moved warily ; but went soon to San Francisco, fully determined to give himself into the hands of the law, and to confess all. But he happily met his



clerical friend of the outward voyage, and into the ears of this friendly parson, he poured the account of his wicked adventures. But the minister told him his victim was living. And,—to make short the long story, the details of which I heard at intervals during many days,—the hand of love led the misguided man to his mother's Saviour, and the very peace of God. But the joy of our faith could not yet kindle in his heart; at least not enough to dispel the sadness which a sense of sin had stamped on his face. Night after night, as we coursed the shining waves of a tropical sea, we walked the deck by moonlight, holding sweet communion together. My own faith and love grew stronger; and I learned a lesson in the business of winning men to Christ.

XXV.

ERECTING THE AIR CASTLES.

THE next letter I received from Cephas, told me that he was himself the New England pastor, who met the detective on the ship in going to California; that he disguised himself, and led his pursuer strange routes week after week. He met the scamp after his return to the Bay, and tried to do him good; but did not tell him the secret. From the Englishman's story, he concluded that the guardians of Helen's property might be the ones who had sent for him; and it was their fault, not her's, that he had heard nothing from her directly. This theory, however, he had no means of substantiating. The detective had never seen Helen, and knew nothing of the circumstances of the family. This letter from Cephas was written on Telegraph Hill, overlooking the bright waters of the Bay and the ships sailing in and out of the Golden Gate. My friend was rejoicing in what he called perfect health, and entering his work with a bound. Already, new churches and schools, and schemes of moral agitation were passing in vision before his eyes.

And when, as the months rolled by, I had so far

caught Cephas' missionary spirit as to leave my home by the sea and undertake work upon the rugged backbone of this continent, in a village,—I beg pardon of all Western men, it was a "city,"—half tilted up on mountain crags and half tumbled into ravines, I used often to get letters from my friend, in which were glowing accounts of a new college begun on paper. One day, as I sat in a cosey nook of a wild ridge facing the saw-teeth mountains of the west, I read quite an elaborate document, which really looked as if Cephas' New Education would have a fair chance to be tested. The school was located with some property, and plenty of wise men to manage it.

Upon another day, when I was weary with gazing on hillsides aflame with flowers, and tracing the course of swift streams over polished rocks, whose bright colored veins shone like beds of jasper, topaz and emerald,—I sat down under a cottonwood to read again and again Cephas' letters. These told me of the energy with which he was pursuing his studies ; devouring boxes of books, and making notes upon a thousand bits of paper ; filling up his pigeon-holes with material for future work. And he began to thank God for triumphs of coming years, much as the three Spaniards praised Him before they left home, for the victories they were yet to gain in the conquest of Peru.

One day I received a strange paper from Cephas. I did not then know whether he meant to send it to me, or whether it came by accident through his directing the wrong envelope and sending me certain notes de-

signed for his pigeon-holes. That it might have been by accident, seems now the more likely, since I have lately found among his manuscripts a letter never received, marked on the back,—“Shagbark in the rocks.” He had probably interchanged the papers. By the notes I received, I learned what keen hours of joy he had in carrying all his pet plans to God.

“Here was one,” says the manuscript, “who in his out door praying, used to climb about among the pockets of wild crags or on a mountain side in the night, when his neighbors could not see his wanderings. He said, somewhat quaintly, that many passages of Scripture came to mind with peculiar freshness,—‘Let thine eyes look right on, and thine eyelids straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand or to the left.’ And he said, ‘I will take heed to my ways.’ Slippery places, the ways of darkness, and stumbling among the mountains, were phrases that came to the mind of him who said,—‘He maketh my feet like hind’s feet, and setteth me upon my high places.’ And he asked that God would give his angels charge over him, lest at any time he should dash his foot against a stone. Such imagery and such prayers as were suggested to David when he was at home among rocky hills, came to his mind.

“Nor can it be said that such a course is needlessly eccentric. The Saviour himself visited high places in the night. And if one has very urgent business with God, he will not greatly err in rising a great while

before it is day to go away and talk with him ; and to do it in such place as he may find most secluded, and most suggestive of God's immediate presence.

"Sometimes by day, this mountaineer could go a little further from the town ; and wandering long in the trackless wilds,—now sitting, now rising, now walking, now prostrate,—he said,—‘Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising ; * * Thou compassest my path, and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.’ He felt that God as a person knew every step he took, every emotion he felt, and every word he uttered. In those great solitudes where Nature was mighty and men were few, he asked,—‘Shall any man feel lonely with Almighty God by his side ?’

"‘As,’ he said, ‘I am climbing about mountain crags, secreting myself in every crevice, crying unto God and praising Him, the words of the Psalms come wonderfully to mind, and I call God my Rock. These ledges suggest to me the Rock of Ages. Amid castle rocks and towers that rise on the sides of the mountains, I call God my Tower, where I take refuge. I find in him new tokens of kindness, peculiar adaptation to my personal wants, day by day ; and I emphasize the pronoun as I cry, *my* Rock, *my* Tower. I know that I am so guilty, that I ought to cry to rock and mountain to fall upon me to hide me from the face of God ; but when I remember that day in which the rocks were rent in sympathy with my dying Saviour, I can but go frankly to God, and use the words that he himself put into the mouth of the prophet David

who was a sinner like me ; and with that penitent forgiven man I am ready to praise God day and night,—calling upon rock and hill, water brooks and fir-trees, valley and mountain to praise the Lord with me, as I sit in the secret places of the hills.

“Let me ask, my friend, whether it is not suitable for every Christian to come into league with the stones of the field and with all the powers of nature, that upon many a natural altar, upon all the memorable rocks in his region, under every fine shade, upon all high hills, in all deep ravines, and by all streams, he may frequently renew his consecration to God. Moses was intimate with Him whom no man hath seen nor can see : if we are often in rocky clefts, shall we not behold some part of the ineffable glory? May we not commune with the Lord upon hill tops, obtaining the revelation of His will and favors for the perishing millions?”

In a mining country Cephas thought himself the man of luck if he could suddenly disappear in a driving snow storm, and enter some desolate house in a distant mountain ravine ; or if he could find his way into some decaying stamp mill among deserted mines, where he could make himself at home without fear of molestation, and pound out gold all day. His people might have called him wild if they had known his habits, but the gold he took out was more precious than all they could dig from their deep shafts, or wash from the streams ; and his searching the promises of God, as if they had been veins of silver, was making him wealthy.

He asked Him who giveth every good and perfect gift, for a blessing upon the country he lived in,—spiritual benediction worth more to it than all treasure in mountain and mine, wheatfield and garden, vine and fruit.

“Whenever there comes a blinding storm,” wrote Cephas, “I seize upon it as the choicest boon possible, since it makes a solitude everywhere. Whether one is shut in on a prairie alone, or enclosed amid high mountains shaggy with forests and threatening with overhanging ledges and boulders, or walking close by the sea with the waves on one side and rough rocks on the other side, a snow storm is always a veil shutting off distant prospects ; leaving one alone with God and the great forces of nature. Even when you pass through a village, the snow so fills the air that you hardly notice the houses ; and if on a forest road you meet a snow-clad teamster, he looks so like a storm spirit that your thoughts are not turned from their course ; and your own beard and clothing are so filled and covered with the fast falling winter, that you hardly know yourself as a man ; you heed only the spiritual world. If you choose to lie down upon a bed of snow in the woods with your face upward, and see and feel fine snow falling fast upon you, it will be but little while before you think for the moment that you are a part of the system of nature around you ; and find yourself liable to be buried in the snow like a fallen tree. It is when a man gets so out of himself, out of the common rut his mind runs in, and has some fresh and strange experience, that he is most awake to spiritual impressions

and is best prepared to commune with Him who delights to make it storm in the season for tempest."

It was upon such days that the Wild Man with the Shagbark plodded all day. I shall never forget the impression made upon me by these revelations of my friend's habits of life in a new country. I became fully confident that his old-time dreams of great usefulness in laying the foundations of many generations would be now fulfilled. He was a hard student; thoroughly practical in managing affairs, painstaking in details, wise in counsel, farsighted in making plans, and he had the solitary habits of a Hebrew prophet.

XXVI.

THE EARTHQUAKE'S SHOCK.

AS the months went by, I learned much about the effects of dry mountain air in a country almost cloudless for a large part of the year,—air sweet to the taste and stimulating like wine, giving one the sense that he is inhaling new energy,—an atmosphere quickening to the nervous activity, intensifying the life and preparing unwise men,—who allow themselves no respite, and disregard the common conditions of longevity,—to break down suddenly. I was expecting, therefore, to hear that Cephas in like climate had overworked; and I was preparing to see his face, the face of an invalid. I had heard nothing from him for more than half a year. What I next learned was this:—

“‘He hath stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown from my head.’ I have undertaken more than I can do, and have fallen under it. I am compelled to get out of the country altogether, physically unequal to the work. A veto is put upon all further personal experimenting in this line. Henceforth I must desist from works possible only to the strong, and mend my broken body. All I can now look for is to do pastoral

work with small care, and devote myself to my studies. This is the heaviest blow of my life, putting an end to the sleeping and waking dream of all my years. Nothing has so completely wrecked me mind and body since Helen's death.

"I cannot so truly say that Providence has balked my plans, as that I have done it. 'I will hedge up thy way with thorns,' is not in this case so much the voice from heaven, as my own. 'Our actions,' says Goethe, 'equally with our sufferings, clog the course of our lives.' I can see my own lack of judgment and my own blunders, which have led to this result. 'If you have endured baseness of soul, impute not the fault to the gods.'

"The formation of unreasonable expectations—miscalculation, error in judgment,—is probably the ultimate ground of all my sorrows. I have known so little of the usual course of divine providence that I have made impracticable schemes. My knowledge of human nature has not been sufficient to prevent my being buoyed up by vain expectations, the failure of which has sunk me the deeper in difficulty. The most prudent man has numberless regrets; and there are many, wise and unwise, who finally face the fact that life-long projects are overthrown by mistakes that could have been easily avoided. It is these disappointments we prepare for ourselves, which act as make-weight, turning the scale, in the physical crisis of life. My failure of health is most complete; the nervous exhaustion of long continued, highly exciting and severe labor, being

now accompanied by a general fall of all my Air Castles as if by the Shock of an Earthquake.

“Today I have read Luther, where he says,—‘I cannot guide myself, and yet would fain guide the world! Many a time I have made fine articles and rules, and brought them to our Lord God to guide Him. But the good God has let me see in the end how all my mastering has come to nothing.’ I feel satisfied, however, that this is excellent discipline. If we make mistakes in solving the problem of life, our very blundering may teach us to exercise more care. If we learn to know our errors and gain a little wisdom, we shall be better prepared for a higher life. Surely our Father loves us none the less for our blundering and the schooling we get from it. My friend Nellie writes,—‘I am very grateful to Providence for giving me a stage of existence in which to learn how to live. I suppose we should feel infinitely more disappointed, if we had to make all our missteps in a higher plane of existence.’ All I can do in these dark hours is to use the words of old time,—‘Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto Thee.’

“Yet, on the whole, I am bearing my new burden cheerfully. And when I forget my feelings and settle down to think, I appreciate the wise saw which declares that ‘Life is a comedy to those who think, and a tragedy to those who feel.’”

After some weeks, in which I heard nothing further from my friend, I received a communication from one

of the members of his church in California, which revealed a tragedy little looked for.

The pastor had been to Humboldt Bay to rest. One morning after a storm, a vessel was discovered overturned in the harbor. Cephas went with others to see if relief was needed. Climbing up the side of the schooner's bottom, a sound was heard, as if some one in the hold was feebly pounding to attract attention. As soon as axes could do the work, an opening was made ; and a living child about two years old was found in the arms of a mother just dead. The mother had managed to get a position with the upper part of her body out of water, which filled the vessel except about two feet next the bottom ; and the child had been so secured that he should not fall. Then with an old mustard-pot in her hand the woman had been pounding to make an alarm, if any one by chance should come to the rescue. The last sounds she made were heard by the boatmen ; her dying strength had been given to the blows, and she was dead when Cephas laid hold to lift out the body. The child had a tin rattle in his hand. He bore his mother's features ; and she was the very image of the dead Helen.

"This is my Helen," said Cephas, as the body was placed in the boat.

The burial service took place under a giant red-wood ; and there the remains now rest. A tablet is placed upon the tree,—“In memory of one with face and figure like Helen.”

The body of another passenger was found, thought

by the boatmen to be most likely a younger brother of the dead mother. From some articles probably theirs, it appeared that they were English people. Not one of the coaster's crew survived. The little child was cared for by a settler's wife, and then placed in a family in San Francisco: he is now standing by my side as I write. The shock of this wreck and the rescue, and the rising of the face of the dead and the child image — added to the nervous prostration under which my friend had been for some time suffering — resulted in a mental state so morbid, that my correspondent described it as more than semi-madness. It seemed impossible to divert his mind; and there was some danger of a complete overthrow of the intellect if a decisive change did not take place at once. It was under these circumstances that Cephas left the country, and came to my home in Colorado.

I found him in my study one day, upon my return from Rogers' Hill. He was reading; and when he raised his face at my incoming, I could see that my friend of the past was no more: here was a man new to me; almost shattered, as I thought at the time. A day or two, however, sufficed to give a new tone to his talk. Within a week I could see that the memory of former days and living contact with an intimate friend was giving him a fresh hold on living. His will gained such strength before a month was over, that he began to master himself and look on the side of hope and life.

One day we went to the cabin of a devout old man,

who lived in a lonely gulch, which had been badly torn by the miners and left in desolation. The noble face of the grayhaired saint met us at the door; he had a Bible in his hand. Entering, we found that the little hut, perhaps twelve feet by twenty, was divided into four or five apartments. First going through a sort of woodshed, we turned to the right into a back passageway leading to the workshop, then wheeled round to the right again so as to walk in the direction whence we came, and entered a minute kitchen. There was just room enough for a small stove, an office-chair well cushioned, shelves for dishes, and a little cuddy for provisions. Four feet by five is too large a measurement for the room as I remember it. Stepping across the kitchen, we came into the front parlor, just five feet square, with a narrow bench running around it.

"This room," said our host, "I built on purpose to hold prayer meetings in."

We sat down, and held a prayer meeting; two or three gathered in the name of the Lord. The old man still had his thumb in the Bible, as when we met him at the door. He had awaked that morning with a feeling of great anxiety about some vexing thing unknown to me; and so he had taken the Bible, beginning at Genesis to turn the leaves, to find in Old Testament story those texts which just met his want at the hour; it being now ten o'clock, his book was open at Isaiah. Patriarchs and psalmists, and the Voice of God, had been heard in his dwelling since break of day. And when he stood up to pray, with face looking

upward,—I never saw him kneel,—it was like the pleading of one of the ancient prophets. There was a wild rhapsody, not always connected and making what we call good sense, but always a great sense of man's sinfulness and nothingness, and the holiness and greatness of the Infinite Majesty. God was so exalted in his prayers, that the half hour seemed short,—like a moment of standing by Ezekiel in time of vision.

Before our going out, this man of four score drew aside a curtain on the wall, that we might see his sleeping place. It was built like a ship's berth, such as he used to occupy in his boyhood days of sea-faring. When we were leaving the house, untying our ponies and leading them across the ravine, this lonely man who commonly kept company with prophets and guardian angels, went with us a little distance. As we were about to part he stood still: pointing to the loose boulders about us, to the ragged heads of the mountains, and to certain snow clad peaks in the distance, he waved his hand, saying,—

“Everything you see is motive power. These rocks and mountains are to be used in crushing rocks and mountains. The Sierra Madre will crumble under machinery, moved perpetually by dead weight.”

His eye kindled, and he raised both hands above his bare head; and, looking earnestly into my face, he added,—

“I have a secret which will level the everlasting hills, and pound them into powder. I may not see it, but I have the idea; and it will revolutionize the world.”

Riding over the top of the next ridge, I told Cephas of a great favor once shown me, when this inventor took me into the largest and fairest apartment of his cabin, where he experimented upon a machine which would never cease to move when once started with dead weight applied in the right place, and whose power would be limitless as the weight of the earth. He had promised to tell me sometime the principle upon which it was based, lest the secret die with him. And, indeed, sometime after, he came to my house to explain it, as a mark of peculiar confidence, so that I now have the old man's legacy with which to bless the world. Forty years had not been enough to perfect the machine.

When we reached the top of Quartz Hill, a sudden squall came sweeping down upon us. Through the thin veil we could see the white heads of the Great Range hardly ten miles away. The falling flakes concealed the sky—the ordinary background of the mountains—and obscured the distance between us and the hoary peaks; so that it seemed as if these massive neighbors had come close to us through the storm, their apparent height vastly increased by the removal of the blue sky over their heads. Often, as I sit in my study, I live over again that magical moment, in which summer turned to winter, the ground whitened, and the Rocky Range advanced upon us, in a few seconds of time.

"I am just like that old man," said Cephas with his wintry beard. "The idea he has in his brain seems of

unspeakable import to him ; but who else thinks so? I have been dreaming for years that I have an educational idea which will revolutionize the world."

Then he told me how he had made everything ready to establish firmly the new education ; but by imperfect knowledge of men, lack of judgment, by the fault of others, and through ill health, the whole thing now existed on paper only, and could not live except through his work, now ended or deferred for years when the favorable hour would be past. When his story was ended, I assumed the part of Theresa Panza, and addressed him as follows :—

"Without founding a new education your mother, Sancho, brought you into the world ; without founding a new education you have lived till now ; and without it you will be carried to your grave whenever it shall please God. How many folks are there in the world, who have founded no new education ; and yet they live and are reckoned among the people."

Taking up the cue of Cervantes, my friend Cephas Sancho answered,—

"I tell you that did I not expect, ere long, to see myself the founder of a college after my own heart, I vow I should drop down dead upon the spot."

"How many dollars," I asked, "have you salted down for making an endowment in your will, according to your old project."

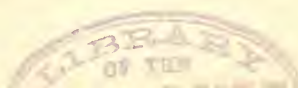
"Not one," he replied.

Bitter tears, distilled by years of hard contending with poverty and disappointment, filled his eyes as he

told me of pecuniary embarrassments, which weighed upon him with peculiar force in hours of physical weakness. He had, however, managed to hold his right in the old house and land of his childhood, the crag and grave by the sea ; and the rocky farm was fast rising in value, since the Island Home had been frequented as a sea-side resort. He hoped there would be the means of making his estate square with the world, if he should lie down suddenly to sleep by the side of Helen : there might also be a balance by which to fulfil the compound interest miracle, and establish a big college within a few centuries. But he assured me that this vision had been sadly disturbed by acquaintance with the ways of the world.

“The genius of our laws is against the principle of tying up property for the sole use of some future generation,” said he. “Courts object to having money lie idle. The larger part of it must do present and constant service. Only a fraction of the interest can accumulate, and that for only a limited time. In England where great estates were not to be divided for a century, the House of Lords broke the will, because in a hundred years all the floating capital in the country would be absorbed by it. I don’t, however, think that any legislature will interfere to break my will lest it interrupt the business of the nation.

“As I think of all this, now, I remember an old dream of walking in New York city. I had to go about five miles. In order to have a convenient piece of furniture to lie down on, as I should certainly want to



before returning, I took along a settee. Lest some boy steal it, if I should leave it by the way, I tied one end of a small cable to it and made the other end secure down town. So I walked with the settee under my arm uncoiling the cable for about three miles and a half; then climbed over a wall, sat down upon my settee in an orchard, and there left it till my return. In this dream I had not the slightest sense of incongruity. I seemed to myself to be taking a perfectly rational course.

"In like manner, all my carefully elaborated plans for making millions of money, by leaving a small sum to trustees for a school several hundred years hence, once seemed to me exactly the thing,—a capital idea, one likely to revolutionize society. But on mingling with the world I find that I was dreaming in the forest of Tragabigzanda.

"This confession holds, however, only in regard to this peculiar method of bringing it all about. The idea itself of the new education is as sound as ever it was. I feel just as sure that it is a good thing, as our friend down the hill does of his machine for perpetual motion. I have been thwarted in setting this project on foot. But if I ever regain my health, I'll try it again. And if I don't succeed, I shall certainly be the richer in soul for having tried to do something worthy."

It was some days before this topic was alluded to again. We were in my study. And Cephas read aloud the saying of Loyola,—“If perchance the Society,

which I have begun and furthered with such toil, should be dissolved or perish, after passing half an hour in prayer, I should, by God's help, have no trouble from this thing, than which none sadder could befall me."

"This is my prevailing feeling," added Cephas, "in regard to the ways in which I have tried to serve God and man. He whom I consult knows what is best. I sometimes think that all we get out of life is our personal discipline. 'Walk before me, and be thou perfect,' is good advice for us as for Abraham. It is better to spend life in trying to fulfil that ideal than to spend it in fretting about God's unfulfilled promises. He will do all things well, as we shall see in due time; meantime, we are to try to do all things well."

One day, Cephas said he hoped sometime to hear from Nellie in England, and that through her help the college plan would triumph.

His mind was subject to great fluctuation of feeling; hours of faith alternating with moments of dejection. Once full of great purposes, his life was now perplexed under common cares. His high ideals seemed to be sinking like a great range of mountains,—“lost mountains” with bases deeply concealed, barely showing their heads above interminable beds of sand or alkali desert. This indication of mental weakness alarmed me.

Four or five months, however, toned up the man so decidedly, that I began, with him, to have hope for the future.

In regard to the cherished school plan, there is evidence that he secretly clung to his faith: although some of the notes he made in these months, read in the light of after days, may indicate the vagaries of a mind imperfect in its balance, rather than that lofty confidence in his thought and in God which we call faith. Certain it is, that he sometimes climbed the most precipitous crags or peaks, and made them his altars for still pleading with God for those projects, to which he had been long devoted.

Passing through Russell Gulch upon the road from Central to Idaho, Alp mountain is the highest point on our left. If we turn at the head of Virginia cañon and follow the ridge to this height, we shall obtain the finest view in the region. East are the foot hills and great plains. In the north a mass of grey hills are tumbled together, naked or clad with trees,—and far away are seen the wall-like crags on the Boulder road. All along the more distant northwest and west, we look upon the great Snowy Range. On the south, the gigantic Chief and his family rise beyond the deep cañon of South Clear creek, whose waters are dashing white three thousand feet below.

Standing here one day, I saw heavy squalls rising in the southwest, pouring over the head of Mt. Bierstadt into the bosom of the Chicago lakes. Finding a big crooked pine, with rocky seats under it, a little southeast from the highest point of the hill, I had perfect shelter; and gazed upon the strange and shifting scenery of the storm. The distant crags of the moun-

tains on the horizon were covered with the advancing squadrons of the rain; and soon their uppermost valleys were filled. All along the Range dark clouds rolled up from the west, and quickly distributed their weight of waters over every hill side. In riding down the wood-road to Russell Gulch, returning to Central, I encountered another shower,—this time the yellow leaves of the aspen.

It was, according to Cephas' papers, upon this wild ridge, by the side of a fallen pine, that, in a moment of semi-madness or of ecstatic faith, my friend saw—far beyond all the natural beauty around him—rising in every land schools of that particular order for which he had so long toiled and prayed. A needle from that pine was taken by him as a witness to his fervent faith; and he made marks on a pocket map of the world, as if his faith and works would some day make no mean conquests upon this globe.

XXVII.

THE WORK LAID DOWN.

THERE was opposite my house on the Pat Casey road an unoccupied house, and I often used the shady side of the roof, which could be easily reached from the hillside above, as my study on a Sunday morning. It was here,—with several goats and a donkey standing or wandering upon the rocks near by, and myself upon the roof, for auditors,—that Cephas one day read a paper he had just written. The tone of the manuscript was in strange contrast with the somewhat ludicrous surroundings.

“THE DYING STUDENT.

“A man lays out a plan for years of study. Ill health cuts out months at a time; and for years he must roam the pastures, like a brute over mountains and plains. It may be little loss to the world; but to him it is inexpressibly sad. For a long time I have wished I could pick up my papers. My attempts to study are constantly interrupted by the vision of death peering in upon me, and asking,—“Who is going to

take care of all these illegible things you call ideas?" Years ago, however, I wrote over my pigeon holes,—
'Thy will be done.' With that I brave the fire which may burn them, or sudden death. And I am almost ready to say,—
'Thy will be done,'—if I shall endure the penalty of over-work, and sit day by day with diseased brain and let my life go by in idleness,—

"'As I have seen the pine,
Famed for its travels o'er the sea,
Broken with storms and age, decline,
And in some creek unpitied rot away.'

"Long since, I began to turn away from the open doors of libraries, more precious to me than the treasure houses of kings. Certain studies I have had to defer till I can take them up in the eternal world. I must now begin to tie up my work. The body is breaking up, and the labor of all my years is like a ship yard with some keels laid, some timber in shape—and a world of chips. Sooner or later it comes to every man that the life work must be laid down. I am brought to this moment in middle life. I hear a voice, saying,—
'Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.' 'My days are past, my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart.'

"How many poets and artists die with poem, painting and sculpture in their souls unwrought. Within a few days, I have read the sad sweet story of Maurice de Guérin and his sister Eugénie. Death cut off the brother early, then the sister before she could publish

what he had written. Such simple piety, unaffected modesty, sprightliness, beauty of homely life, genuine genius graceful and natural, does not bless our world once in five centuries. Their lives were poems of singular beauty and power, read by few. Did they fail of the highest success in life, because their fame was so limited? How well does Disraeli, the elder, compare the early death of students to the death of infants and young children. We can easily count up many of great promise, cut off before thirty years old. Men stand by, and coldly say of one that he worked too hard:

“A fiery soul, that working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy body to decay,
And o’er informed the tenement of clay.”

“Some days I feel like a sailor upon his plank in mid-ocean, soon to sink into the deep waters alone. ‘Many a vital spirit has departed, over which no one has wept.’ Life after life is ended, and upon the tomb is placed this epitaph,—‘Like all lives, this was a tragedy: high hopes, noble efforts, under thickening difficulties and increasing impediments; ever new nobleness of valiant effort,—and the result, death, with conquest by no means corresponding.’ And we do not even stop to ask who wrote these words, indicating an author who experienced the common lot of man.

“Often in the night I have risen to pray, ‘Hide not thy face from me; put not thy servant away in anger.’ I said,—O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days. But he has weakened my strength in the

way ; He has cut off my days with pining sickness : I am counted with them that go down into the pit. In vain I cry,—What profit is there in my blood ? Shall the dust praise Thee ? shall it declare Thy truth ? I shall be soon forgotton, as a dead man out of mind ; free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave. But an unfinished life with all its unfulfilled ambitions is complete, if heaven is grafted on the cut stalk. If I receive with thankfulness life's best discipline, it will be more pleasing to God than any monument of spiritual labor that I can raise as a memorial of my life."

"I confess to you, Edward," added Cephas, "that I have sometimes struggled hard with my destiny ; and tried to win from it a few more years of toil, that if possible I may finish my papers and perpetuate my life in print."

"As to the first part of your remarks, Cephas," I replied, "I have not the remotest idea that you are going to die yet awhile. I have seen many a man overworked, and if he once gets into a thoroughly morbid state, so that his personal adventures seem to him more important than the rise and fall of empires, he is likely to turn about and get well. When the condition of one's head, and the number of hours in which he can lose consciousness in sleep, occupy the mind in place of spiritual projects to modify society age after age, the chance is that he will sleep and take care of his head instead of bothering about society and distant ages. You have studied so much out of doors all your life, that you cannot go out now without studying. If

you will change your tactics and live in the open air, pecking about without thinking any more than a hen, you will live to do as much work as you ought to do.

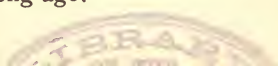
“For the other point you made, about printing books, you remember that when you and I were boys together in New Hampshire, we used to see the wild geese flying over spring and autumn; but we never thought it worth while to inquire the name of the goose leading the harrow. When the students of future generations go pillaging libraries, and see your book at one end of a shelf in some immense library, they will never think to inquire what your initials, ‘C. T.,’ stand for. ‘Cephas Timothy’ will not mean so much to them as it does to you. But you will be amply avenged on most of them, who will live and die as obscurely as yourself: and their attempts to gain what you call a permanent usefulness, will not be much helped or hindered, whether you happen to leave two books or three as your ‘Works’ on that shelf,—not even if they should pluck leaf by leaf like feathers from a goose.”

“When I sailed, some summers ago, along the coast of Campo Bello,” replied Cephas, “the fog veiled the cliffs; and an echo returned to me from the unseen shore. The lives of most of us are really as trivial as that echo, so far as concerns the great world and ages of history,—a sound from out the darkness of some unknown land, by chance reaching the ear of a passing voyager and then heard no more forever. Life is like a sigh borne over the sea waves on the wind.

“When I have been lying down by the side of pools and brooks in the woods, I have spent many hours in watching the common water-skater (*hydrometer stagnorum*). He glides about the water a few days, perishes, and another takes his place; yet their generation is ever known upon the earth. So I sit in my study on an evening beside an open fire; I glide about busily for a few days among my parishioners, and under the eye of any stranger who may chance to pass that way; then I am known no more on the earth forever. Still, age after age, the generations of obscure students fail not. The swift skater and the plodding student fulfil their work in the economy of nature or of human life, and then go their way.

“But as I sit by my evening fire I am dreaming of a home and a career in the skies, where I shall serve amid numbers without number as king and priest forever. What matters it then if I have no fame upon the earth or peculiar glory on high, since I am sporting in the divine light day by day. I look forward gladly to the hour when I shall be numbered with the unknown dead; and another shall build the fire upon my hearth, study at my window and move about the town as I do now.”

As we returned to my home, I found the words of Antoninus:—“Short is the time which every man lives, and small the nook of the earth where he lives; and short, too, the longest posthumous fame, and even this only continued by a succession of poor human beings, who will very soon die, and who know not even themselves, much less him who died long ago.”



“He is the wisest man,” said my friend, “who works hardest for to-day, if he does his work as well as he can. The only immortality worth seeking is an undying influence—not reputation. Influence is impersonal, unknown; reputation pertains to a name. No matter whether or not the men of the future happen to know your name; if they are unconsciously modified by your life, it is enough. We are not to search for deathless fame, but for posthumous power though it be nameless: that is gained not necessarily by authorship, but through the sway conscious and unconscious we are exercising every day upon the men around us.

“Unless a man’s life is better than his books, his books will be good for nothing. To do good to our next neighbor, to search out the children of sorrow, to make one’s life noble, is better than mere book making. To have a moral hold on men now living is the way to obtain mastery in the next age of the world.

“A man dies, and henceforth his influence is most likely not called by his name, but his life-work is still a power in the world: as the water from a river becomes a part of the ocean current after it has lost the name it was known by. Indeed, there are cases in which mighty men make a personal impression on the world after they die, as the Amazon preserves its integrity for a few score of miles amid the sea waves; but the great bulk of mankind die as die the brooks and small rivers, falling into the sea and making no noticeable impression,—yet it is a great mistake to suppose that there is no impression made. I die tonight; but the

members of my own family and of my own circle of acquaintance will never be again as if I had not known them. My influence upon them for evil or for good will be perpetuated in them, and through them to others, modifying remote generations: it will live forevermore enduring as the waters of the deep, with countless changes, a power through all ages."

"Did you never think," I asked, "that ill health brings a compensation with it when it keeps a man always ready for the upper house? By it one is always ready to exchange his pilgrim staff for the wings of an angel."

"Yes," he answered. "Today in talking with a sick man, I reminded him of the old illustration about the Arabian tents:—they pull up one tent pin after another, and then carry away the tent. So we lose one faculty, as this man of locomotion; then some other power, and then our bodies are removed. 'How glad we should be,' I said, 'when the signs of removal come, and one tent pin after another is taken away.' It flashed upon me in a moment, that this terrible headache I have had so long is to prepare me for my departure. Even now in what I have supposed to be middle life, I have sure tokens of death about me. And am I glad? I thought about my unfinished work; but with unspeakable joy said at once,—'I am ready. Though my work is half done, my purpose is perfect; and my aspirations are perfect. The work that I can do here is small; and the heavenly work is ample enough. If I may enter upon that world I will instantly drop my

present employments, like an artist suddenly called to a throne.'

"I am ready to drop earthly work, and look for the same service in another sphere. I would gladly die if I must, in the midst of my years. And the thought of being unknown upon the earth will not disturb my dying pillow or the moments next beyond."

"What avails it," he asked, after an interval of silence, "this buzzing about like a gadfly? To live personally near to Christ, is worth more than all we call our activities."

Long after we had retired for the night, I rose and walked my study floor in the bright moonlight. In the Colorado mountains it is easy to read by a full moon. I took down my Whittier, and found these lines,—

"The yearning of the mind is stilled,—
I ask not now for fame.

But, bowed in lowliness of mind,
I make my wishes known ;
I only ask a will resigned,
O Father, to thine own.

In vain I task my aching brain,
The sage's thoughts to scan ;
I only feel how weak I am,
How poor and blind is man.

And now my spirit sighs for home,
And longs for light to see.
And, like a weary child, would come,
O Father, unto Thee."

Several mornings after, we went to the top of Bald Mountain before sunrise. The light was stealing over the great plains eastward, and touching the tops of the foot hills. From southwest to northwest the snow-clad mountains were rose-tinted with the rays of the dawn. The deep cañon at our feet upon the west was still dark. We did not feel a breath of air; but the change in the state of the atmosphere upon the east of the Great Range caused by the advancing day, drew the colder air upon the west of the mountains eastward: and we could hear the sound of its coming ten miles away; mountain crags and pines roaring like the sea in a storm. My ears are like sea-shells far inland, and I am always awake to the sound of the ocean; so that the murmuring mountains aroused at once all my old passion for the sea.

"Which do you like best," I asked, turning to my companion, "the mountains or the sea?"

But I saw him deadly pale; and he made no answer. The sea to him meant only a wreck, and the stranger dead—so like his Helen. A sound like the deep sea waves touched the sensitive spot in his brain. We turned away; and he was sadly ill all that day. So easily was his physical condition affected by mental causes; and his mind was elevated or depressed by the state of his body.

Day by day we read Scott's novels. One evening, Cephas said as he laid down the book,—

"I would like to read over again the *Pirate*, which I have not looked at for years, if there were not so much

ragged coast and surging brine in it. I often think nowadays, that I am like Norna of Fitful Head. I have not dreamed that I could control the powers of nature; but I have lived in a sort of ecstasy thinking evermore of a high mission to perform in life,—adventures in shaping new countries for Christ, book making, and school building; and I have had visions of angels ascending and descending in my daily walks. Now, however, my brain reels, I doubt myself, and my projects look a little mad. Last night, I spent two hours wide awake,—when I ought to have been fast asleep,—in thinking about the wretched accumulation of bits of paper, which I have called ideas, so carefully preserved in my pigeon holes. I am ready to cry out with the dying Tasso, and ask my friends to burn them all, especially those I have thought the most of; as his morbid mind was most set against his favorite work ‘Jerusalem Delivered.’ I have done all I could; but my own inefficiency has made me disappointed with myself. I have had high ideals.

‘I was ambitious * * * ;
But never did king, pontiff, chief, or citizen
Conceive a project grand as mine.’

I was ambitious; but I failed in sound judgment. It has been the old story over again,—the laying out of works never to be finished; the same blunder which hundreds of students have made before me. Great preparation have I made for writing, which now seems to me waste of labor. My industry is lost through lack

of well proportioned 'roundabout common sense' in undertaking so much only as I could do. The startling truth is coming home to me that my early dreams have all failed. I have tried to achieve what was for me impossible.

"I certainly thought myself equal to the work. I have been conscious of a mental power not put forth in my writings. No topic is handled according to the ideal I have in mind. I cannot in this world bring out the powers which I know are slumbering within. Not yet can I paint Christ as He appears to me. To learn to write has been always before my mind as my highest ideal and aim in life. I have utterly failed. My style is bad—unmanageable. I have gained little information; what I have, is ill digested. My health is breaking up.—You might as well take the stuff which I have prized above gold, and put match to it. It'll catch quick as gas. Here is the key of my pigeon holes. Do what you have a mind to with my papers: I shall never look at them again."

I could see that my friend was getting a little wild, and I said nothing on the topic; but began to rattle the dice, taking out a backgammon board, which always brought him to his senses. He was fond of the game requiring no thought, and played at it by the half hour with me though never with any one else. But before he took a shake, he threw down the key which locked his papers; and said,—

"We read, in the New Testament, about dumb devils and unclean devils. Now, all my life I have been

possessed at times with a vain devil ; and he has made some notes, mixing them in with my papers. I would they were out ; but you will see them."

In looking over Cephas' manuscripts in recent months, I have, indeed, found some notes which indicated that at times he had a morbid self consciousness, as if all that he did was in the world's eye. According to these memoranda, he, sometimes at least, firmly believed that his educational plan would become one of the most important fixtures of this world ; and that this fact would gain him readers he would not otherwise get ; and also that on this account his life experiences would be possessed of an interest they would not excite under other circumstances. Some of these notes which he attributed to the vain devil certainly read a little strangely in my friend's handwriting ; for he was to all outward appearance the most modest of men,—rarely referring to his own work and turning off quickly any compliment made to him, diverting the conversation if his own good deeds were spoken of. Yet, I have a feeling that his was an infirmity common to man. Indeed, I could myself have written the following sentence, which I find signed at the bottom,—“*Vain Devil.*”

“I sometimes sigh to be praised ; and on Sabbath or week day wish some one would speak an appreciative word.” But there is on the back of it this endorsement,—“I cannot find that Christ ever thought of such a thing.”

In looking over Cephas' pigeon holes, which has now

been my employment for some time, I find directions for me to do thus and so,—as if he had contemplated the possibility of these papers coming into my hands. I am not prepared to condemn his manuscripts wholesale as thoroughly as he did. It is certain, however, that he well described some of them when he marked on a paper band by which one pile of papers was strapped together,—

“*Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen, ademptum.*”

Which, by his own free translation, means, “monstrous and horrid, unformed and blind, needing a pine tree for support,” etc. In making a critical estimate of my friend’s work, I cannot say that he had extraordinary success in his sermon making. Yet—taking all his ideas jotted down upon little bits of old envelopes, ragged strips of ribbon paper, fragments white brown and yellow—I find many thoughts singularly inspiring. I look at them and say in despair,—“What an inheritance!” There are, also, some manuscripts cleanly prepared which I think others will value highly as I do, if the time ever comes to put any part of them before the public.

But all this is aside from the point in hand. I have been led into this opening of Cephass’ pigeon holes by the key he threw that evening upon my backgammon board. After the game closed, I opened Emerson’s Essays, and read to Cephass:—“I look on that man as happy, who, when there is question of success, looks into his work for a reply, not into the market, not into opinion, not into patronage.” And I added,—“You

have been long conscious that you were trying to do a good work ; and you ought not to throw up everything in discouragement, in one moment of depression induced by overwork."

After this, Cephas' health mended so rapidly and decidedly, that within a month, he set off upon a long talked of journey to Idaho and Montana ; hoping to be able to return within a twelve month to the Pacific coast. He was buoyant and hopeful, quite like himself, and I had no anticipation of evil. When we separated at the end of Bates' Hill overhanging Black Hawk, I put into his hand a card with these directions :—

"NEVER OVERDO IN ANY ONE DAY,—eating, walking, spiritual exercises, study, parochial work, or preaching ; but, on the other hand, do enough of each to have a well proportioned life. You may thus keep your soul in your body till you are sixty."

And when I waved my adieu, I said,—“Into three doors enter not: enter the door of no parishioner's house ; enter not the door of your meeting house ; and enter not your study door. My prescription for a twelve-month."

After Cephas had turned his back, he looked about again, and shouted,—

"Ed! If you ever print any of my papers, make sure to put plenty of yeast into the dough."

It was

"Like a fire upblazing ere it dies,—"

for I never saw him again.

XXVIII.

BLACKHAWK TO BOULDER.

SOME weeks after, I was called one Saturday afternoon, to ride thirty miles across the hills to exchange with one of my nearest neighbors. There had been a little misunderstanding about it, and I was not expecting to go ; so that it was three o'clock before I was under way. Cantering down the Casey Road in Central, and plunging over into Chase's Gulch,—as one would ride over the rim of a kettle and wind down its steep side into the bottom,—I passed Blackhawk and soon entered the way leading by Carl's Ranch to Boulder.

For three or four miles, perhaps — I have forgotten just how far — there is an ascent, up, up ; and looking back the long ravine, one sees Mount Bierstadt, with sharp precipices, snow-clad head and white shoulders, rising grandly in the south. After my morning's study, I felt wonderfully refreshed by the clear air, and cheered by the visions of beauty and grandeur around me. I wished that some of my brethren in the east, moiling in hot towns and weary with care, could ride with me. And I wondered then, as since, that it is so

difficult to get men to leave the climate of New England to dwell in a country where existence is a delight, and a cloudless sky is always inviting one to live out of doors. But too many, I fear, feel like Cuddy Headrigg in the story, a great dread lest they "hae to gang to a far country, maybe twall or fifteen miles aff."

Not unnaturally, as my black horse toiled slowly up the hill, I fell to thinking upon the comforts and advantages of open air life in a good climate. I thought, how strange it is that story-tellers make their characters stay so much in parlors and live evermore in public. In certain moods, I hate houses, and dislike overmuch company. And I went on dreaming about the influence which a clear atmosphere and sweet sunshine has upon the imagination.

Dripping with the brine of the western ocean, and wide awake and keen through breathing the air of the western mountains, we have recently found a storyteller who has put new life into the business. But I notice that in one of his most thrilling sketches, there is a minute report of the dying words and deeds of a party who were snowed in, and who all perished before aid could reach them. The author gives no hint of spirit-rappings; but from no other source could he have obtained an authentic report of their last words. Riding up this lonely mountain road, when I came near the top of the hill,—and looked back toward the basin of Chicago Lake and the broken precipices and peaks that surround it, and the dark ravines flowing down the skirts of the mountains,—I had almost made up

my mind if ever I should write a story,—and I inwardly said, “Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?”—that I would have nothing going on in it which I did not know about directly. I would not, I thought, report conversations occurring in deep window seats by moonlight, or in gardens between two alone unless I should make one of the two.

Inwardly determining always to stick to fact if I should ever tell tales, even at a little sacrifice of variety in the make-up of my story, I galloped quite merrily for several miles, along a heavy mountain wall rising on the right; which I have called the Crawford Crags, since my predecessor is the only man I could find, who had climbed these formidable heights. Then I drove into the woodlands, following streams where trout were leaping and sparkling by the roadside. Often I caught a glimpse of snow-clad mountains in the west, not near and not distant.

By this time I had fully made up my mind, not only to live out of doors all my future life as I always had done—except a few disagreeable hours in houses which I never called really living—but I had settled it that all imaginary heroes I might call up in making parables should also live abroad under the clean heavens. That was a sensible saint, thought I, who is buried near Bokhara in Central Asia, who—so notable as to be a sort of second Mohammed—has determined dead or alive to have fresh air; so that, according to travelers’ tales, for four hundred years more or less, he has resisted every attempt to cover his tomb with a dome

and thrown off the cover within three days after it was done.

At this point, I was riding past a very remarkable pulpit rock, two or three hundred feet above the road, on the right just before reaching Tyler's mill; and I thought of the great delight Cephass would have taken in trying that pulpit. Then I remembered his eccentric chase over the Sierra. And I called up the remarkable adventures I had experienced, once and again, with his pursuer; of whom I had not now heard for perhaps three years. I could not rid myself of the memory of this wild and wicked, though—as I then hoped—penitent man. He seemed to be riding beside me, as the shadows began to fall. And when, near Carl's Ranch, I came upon the massive towers of rock, which rise castle-like scarcely possible to be scaled by human foot, I instinctively turned to point my imaginary companion to the striking features of the landscape. Very soon I stood upon the verge of the mountain plateau I had been riding over; and I was about to go down some thousands of feet in a four mile ride to the depth of the Boulder cañon. From this edge of the mountain, the deep forest-clad valleys are skirting to the north and east; and the plains are seen, rolling from the base of the mountains, wide like a limitless sea. In the evening and the morning lights, and under the full moon, the picture is perfect. I turned off the path to the left to rest my horse, and to stretch myself under the low trees, and to gaze out over the valley before descending into it.

When I again mounted, up dashed my Englishman in person, riding in hot haste from Central to overtake me. He was again on the track of Cephas,—who had not long before left me for Idaho and Montana. The detective had called at my house soon after I left it, and having learned of the late departure of my friend whom he had hoped to find there, he was hurrying on to overtake me, to get a little more exact information as he should press forward in pursuit.

After his return to England he had avoided his employers of the last chase, left his old trade, and in connection with police duties had given himself heartily to doing good among the poor and the wicked of London. While engaged in this work, he formed an acquaintance with the friends of a woman, who gave him a new errand in his old work of following wanderers. He was introduced to the young mistress of a fine mansion, who was an invalid with disease far advanced. She wished to employ him in finding a friend, who was so ill that she feared he would lose his reason, if he had not already lost it; and who was then moving about the wilds of western America, in search of health. He was to be found as quickly as possible, and brought to England, with the message that all their dreams of former years could be then fulfilled.

“By a photograph which she showed me,” said the detective, “taken two or three years since, I at once recognized the New England pastor with whom I went to California, and who became to me a spiritual guide. Surprised and saddened with the news of his ill-health,

and that I was to hunt for him as once for another madman, I told my fair employer some parts of my former hunting adventures, and what her friend had been to me. I could see that my story awakened great agitation. With amazement she at last interrupted me, and then unraveled what was to me a strange riddle. Her father was bitterly opposed to her young American friend; and wished her to give her hand to an unprincipled man of high sounding title, who, upon her father's death, had for a time with two others some control over her property. They were the ones who had sent me into the California mountains. Then I learned that her friend was not only my New England pastor, but also the very victim I sought, your friend; and that he like a half-crazy man had, as an erratic freak, disguised himself, and allowed me to chase him like a roe on the mountains: which, the young lady said, was just like him, so wild and full of spirits."

I cannot now detail the full story as he gave it, but this was the substance.

As we followed a nose-like ridge flanked by deep ravines,—hastening down the mountain side till we reached the rocky bed of the Boulder. I asked many questions concerning the young Englishwoman, who proved to be Helen. So singularly did this fair friend appear again. During the years of silence, her life and Cephas' destiny had been mingled by hands and movements which neither could control. It was her father who sent the detective to the Essex woods; his execu-

tors who sent the man of blood into the Sierra ; and at this time she herself was searching for Cephas, that their old plans might now be carried out.

Riding by the side of the creek, we were shut in by precipitous walls from six hundred to a thousand feet high ; and the valley was so narrow that there was hardly room for the river and the road, the stream having six bridges in half a mile. Hurrying along the wild path, we made the walls of the cañon ring with merry laughter, as we talked of the dangerous trick the Yankee minister had played as a flying maniac ; a story I had already often laughed and wondered over since the Wild Man first told it to me on Telegraph Hill. I learned, also, much about Helen and her family as we rode close beside the untamed, foaming water, which was often loud roaring and white with spray. The full moon threw a weird light upon the swift stream, and upon the grim walls that rose from the banks ; and I was wild with delight as I cantered beside my companion through the six mile ride to the mouth of the cañon. We entered the town, half a mile from the foot of the mountains. •

The night was so enchanting, that, going to the clergyman's quarters, I took his camping blanket, and went with the Englishman a little distance toward Valmont ; where a solitary pyramid like the top of a sinking mountain stands in the level plain. Here we spent the night, half in talking, half in sleeping. In the morning we separated. I told him all I could about my friend's plans of travel ; and he set out upon his track.



From this Valmont hill and plain one looks back upon the mountain range. Living as I do now in a comparatively flat country, my mind often reverts to that evening ride, the moonlight bivouac, and the vision of beauty which greeted my eyes when the sun rose upon the mountains.

Sabbath evening, having no service among the scattered population, I rode by moonlight ten miles up the ravine to Carl's; where I spent the night. My Monday morning ride was filled to the full of keen enjoyment by the cold exhilarating air of four and five o'clock. It was in early July, and I drank from an ice bound brook. But the birds were singing when the sun came up. My eyes were wide open to see the wonders of the mountains; and I saw wonders. A sphinx looked down upon me from a ledge about forty feet above the road. It was a loose boulder about six feet in diameter: and, from a side view at the right point, it presented a complete human head—a good looking giant with standing collar; a front view at a little distance showed the open mouth and teeth of an animal. This was about half a mile below Tyler's saw-mill on the South Boulder. Up the stream after crossing the bridge, I found a remarkable bust of a woman standing out from the mountain side high above me. All this region is alive with grotesque images.

I kept thinking all the way,—What a romantic thing it is to ride off for an "exchange" in the Rocky Mountains! I wished some of my brethren in the east

would become home missionaries for awhile. And I was glad to have the pleasant pictures of that morning to carry with me to Cape Anne, whither I almost immediately removed ; leaving the stern mountains and the loved frontier, on account of a foolish habit I have of overworking for a year or two, and then idling a year or two more to make up for it.

XXIX.

HOUSE ISLAND.

IT was after the leaf fall, in the lull which precedes the winter winds, the true Indian summer time, when I had the next news from Cephas and our English friend. The latter was at my house on the Cape; having a day to wait before steaming to Halifax,—from which place he had recently returned. When we sat down in my study in the morning, the din of the restless sea came in at the open windows. And as we talked, the booming waters grew louder and louder; and I could not stay. We made therefore a trip to House Island.

The tide was fast running out, and by favor of an ash breeze we swept swiftly down over the flats, running with the eel-grass,—which seemed in one place to be the element that buoyed our boat. Where we landed, the strong sea was playing with pebbles; the inrushing and the retreating waves rippled among the rocks, as if they loved them. We went through the little grove, and then stood upon the verge of abrupt walls of rock, overlooking shattered and ragged ledges to the right hand and the left; and before us was the

ocean wilderness tossing its wild waters. We saw the dance of the breakers on black rocks many miles away. And the surf was sounding in a hollow cavern beneath our feet.

On the southeast corner of the island is my study. A huge junk of cliff has separated from the main body, leaving a cool shelter close by the breaking waves. This is the "House" from which the island takes its name, twelve by twelve, of irregular shape, and twenty feet high. A vein of trap was first cut out behind it by the waves, and then the Atlantic put in its lever, and tried to pry it off into the sea, moving it some two feet. It was done when the island had not emerged from the water to its present height, as if the sea were fifteen or twenty feet higher than now. Very likely it has "housed" shipwrecked mariners. It has proved rent free to me many a day when the main-land was sweltering under a hot inland breeze. It is always a delightful place in which to be alone, a true closet among the rocks, with the sea thundering at its very threshold. I had often been with Cephas under this cliff; and here we now talked over the strange turn in his affairs.

He had,—after leaving Central for Montana not long before the detective had arrived at my house in search for him,—moved very quickly, and soon stealthily. Having, indeed, a fit of regular madness for awhile; solitude developing a mental state which society had repressed. And as the dark cloud of unreason settled upon him he imagined himself pursued.

The detective therefore went some distance west and north, before he found out that his invalid had returned to Colorado, and was wandering on the slopes of Clear Creek. The man-hunter, turning to follow his track, roamed over the heights south of Idaho Springs on South Clear Creek—the Pappoose, Squaw and Chief; and then westerly about the frowning ledges of Bierstadt and the ridges above Georgetown.

Having found traces all the way, old camps and bits of writing, he at last came upon the Wild Man's home, in the valley where the Great Range makes an oxbow curve around the head of one branch of Clear Creek, ten miles west of Empire. A little before reaching the base of Red Mountain, the valley has considerable width, and the floor is covered with forest and little parks of grassland. The timber is of good growth; and there are the most perfect fir-trees, making natural hedges close trimmed and of great thickness. Here, very near the bank of the swift sparkling stream, was Cephas' little shelter tent. In every direction the walks among the mountains are delightful: to the east and south—Ruby Mountain and the silver treasures among clouds; north and west,—the Ridge Pole of this continent. In this health-giving room, walled in by high peaks, the invalid, with a supply of stores, had reached a resting place. The Wild Man was discovered just as he was beginning to climb the Red Cone on the south. When his pursuer had crossed the noisy stream, and had come almost up with him, a voice was heard:—

"When shall I be at rest? Hand over hand
I grasp and climb an ever steeper hill,
A rougher path. Oh, that it were Thy will
My tired feet might tread the Promised Land!"

Cephas recognized at once his English friend, and returned to camp. A few sharp ringing blows of the axe soon prepared a home-like fire; the pillar of smoke ascended till the sun went down, and then shone a pillar of fire. Pine stumps, green boughs, and limitless stores of firm wood made the hours pass quickly. The worst of the insane days had gone by; and a certain method in his madness aimed for regaining health by the life of a mountaineer. Meantime he was "prospecting" for gold and silver: and in this was no more mad than half the people of Colorado.

Although most of his talk seemed rational, dark moods like clouds would often flit over his soul. He rose from the fireside in the early evening and walked to a tall cottonwood; where the rising wind was pulling at the leaves. The watchman, fearing lest his patient should wander away, followed; and, concealing himself, overheard him praying—(Job 13:25):—

"Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro, and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?"

Accustomed as he was to wild life in the mountains, the Englishman said that the voice of prayer in that lonely place awakened in him a singular sense of solitude. The sounding in the tops of the pines, the music of the river dashing over its shallow bed, the ghostly forms of the mountains under the moonlight, and the

solitary cry of some beast far down the valley, made the loneliness of the place more apparent. He thought of his former chase for the Madman, and how much he owed to him as his foster father in the spiritual life. He kneeled and began to pray for the invalid. Cephas soon came to his side; kneeling together, they asked for health, a safe way to the sea and over it. Then they returned to their camp fire. First making a bed of fir tips, and a thick shelter against the wind, each rolled himself in his blanket and lay down with feet to the fire for the night. The detective could not easily sleep; and when he came to be drowsy, he was wakened by his companion: who, standing with his back to the fire, was pointing toward him, saying,—

“You shot at me. You are the man.”

With great tact, the Englishman merely said, without raising his head,—

“Yes, and you prayed with me. Lie down and go to sleep.”

“So I did,” he answered, after seeming to recollect himself. And he was again quiet, and disposed to sleep. The detective hardly dared lose himself long, lest his charge should rise and slip away. He silently arranged a staff of spruce so as to be awakened if his comrade should try to creep from his side, and then sought rest. But a sense of the solitude of the situation, the isolation from all men, the necessity of watching his mad companion, the blackness of the sky and the brilliancy of the stars, held his eyes waking. As the night watch wore on, he saw one star after

another move silently past the peaks, the jeweled hour-glass of the mountains. He tried to quiet his mind with remembering old hymns. Over and over again he repeated Wordsworth's line

“The sleep that is among the lonely hills,”—

but there was no sleep for him. He called up the wild imagery of the Hebrew prophets. At last he fixed upon the text,—“They shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods;” and he fell into a troubled sleep.

When he waked the moon had gone down; and the Madman had departed in the darkness. He had taken his blanket, axe and roll; but left his little tent standing. With an Indian's keenness, the detective found the direction he had taken, just as the dawn began to shoot its first arrows into the dark forest. The grim wilderness, looking more drear and untamable than under the strong light of yesterday, was so intricate that it was hard to thread it in the way the Wild Man had taken. The young pines were often so thick that it was needful to force a pathway by breaking twigs; but the branches already broken plainly showed the way. Further on, the forest was high and open; again, the way was tangled and dreary. Dead trees were coming out of the grey dawn; showing weak limbs and trunks, ready to sway, crackle and crash, whenever the voice of the Lord should next shake the wilderness. The crooked path of pursuit led finally into the regular route toward the basin at the head of the valley. After

sunrise squirrels came out to sit on the rocks and fallen trees, to breakfast on grasshoppers, which had begun to come over the range in clouds. The Wild Man was evidently slackening pace; sitting down now and then upon rocks or tree trunks, confident as a chipper. Here was a place where he had rested, making notes; bits of paper told the tale. If I had seen such scraps in the Himalayas I should have known that Cephas had passed that way. One paper picked up appeared to be the fly leaf of a pocket Testament, and on it were written these words from the Rig-veda,—“If I go along trembling, like a cloud driven by the wind; have mercy, Almighty, have mercy.” Another fragment was inscribed with his own words:—“I must walk incessantly and aimlessly. Uncontrollable restlessness, irresistible impulses, bear me onward. When will my disquieted spirit find repose?”

When the pursuer came out of the timber into the wide open space,—which is itself a mountain top, hemmed in by a sharp rough ridge surmounted by occasional peaks and pinnacles of rock,—he had to move with more caution, lest he should be seen too soon by the lunatic. The Wild Man not far away was moving toward the western edge of the basin; evidently planning to pass up the steep of a thousand feet, and over into the Middle Park. Carefully advancing, sometimes under cover of living cedars which were lying down to hide their heads from the west winds, and again under the lee of waterways and by scattered lines of boulders,—he came at last where there was no

cover, and went forward past little pools or minute lakes in the depressions of the basin next to the rim. But the mad traveler did not look back. He was perhaps five hundred feet up the slope ; which was covered with fine broken stones, lying loose and giving under the feet, with here and there a small boulder or irregular block that had lodged in its attempt to roll down the steep roofside. Cephas had laid down his baggage, and was eagerly killing quails ; shooting them at four feet distance with handfuls of stones. And when he had so taken fowl enough for his breakfast, he again marched up the ridge, pulling off the feathers by the way. Absorbed in this occupation he did not notice his pursuer, who finally overtook him lying upon his back on the very top of the divide.

An exchange of — “Good morning” — brought the wild fellow, for the time, to his senses. And they sat chatting together, viewing the prospect. The eye, turning eastward, looks over the backs of sixty miles of mountains, with bare ridges and fir clad ravines ; and, beyond, eighty miles out upon the great plains which roll like the ocean. In the west, there is a mass of mountains a hundred miles wide ; and in the foreground the Middle Park, marked with mighty spurs and undulating valleys. A hundred distinct mountain peaks are counted from this spot. Heavy shower clouds were pouring out their waters on the Blue River Range, which rises like a wall in the west extending ten leagues along the horizon. The treasures of rain were advancing eastward at the rate of forty miles an hour,

deluging the lower mountain ridges and the intervening forests.

But their gazing was sharply ended by the Madman snatching his pack, and starting like a Rocky Mountain sheep down the steep western slope. But he paused, almost before his fellow could follow. He had made a misstep, and moved a rock—already half loosened by the melting snow—and crushed his foot so badly that he had to go back to camp on the strong shoulders of his friend. Singularly enough, all his disorder was then in his foot. His mind was so diverted as to leave him clear-headed.

They had a merry time plodding down the ravine to their last night's lodging. Two or three times on their way, caught by showers, they halted under thick umbrella-arms of cedars, and built a little fire for drying their feet; then pushed on again, till the next shower overtook them. That night the patient slept well; and while the stars were still piercing the tree-tops, the Englishman went for help to remove him.

The way the tide washed now, warned us to rise from our seat by the sea, and take to the oars. We hauled off the boat to the sound of music,—the soothing sound of the incoming tide flowing over rounded stones on the rough shore. Fairly afloat, we laid our quarter up against the heavy billows, which were coming, racing and chasing, from some old battle midseas, like warhorses never weary. We plowed the foaming furrows of the deep, and rode over the ridged waves;

then glided upon low swells up the harbor, amid the noise of clanging sea birds whose wings sparkled with briny drops as they rose from the flood. And all along the pleasant path our feet of ash were treading, my comrade told me how he and the Wild Man came forward to Chicago ; where, without having had any serious lapse of reason since on the mountain top, my friend's returning sense with that of his guide told him to put himself under medical treatment for a time, while the detective hastened to New York. He there found a message bidding him go to Halifax to meet his patron ; who had come over sea, but was lying too ill to proceed further. Word was despatched to Chicago, directing Cephas to follow under medical attendance as soon as possible.



XXX.

THE OLD NECK.

WHEN it came evening, we heard the voice of many waters borne upon the night wind, and again went forth. Walking with careful steps through rocky pastures past the edge of a marsh, where the stealthy sea was silently encroaching on grasses and reeds, we crossed the brown fields and a little ridge of beach grass, and reached the tuneful sands of Old Neck beach, which sounded under our feet as if we were treading upon the keys of some instrument. The tumbling tide, unwearied night and day, was making great uproar. And the waves were running races along the whole shore.

Making our way toward the right of the beach, in first coming upon the rocks we found a little spit of sand, like a triangular room surrounded with walls of stone. Here to the left rises like an inclined plane a sharp-backed ledge, up whose ridgepole we climbed; and then lay down in certain rough cradle-like rifts upon the peaked top. Here we had the sea dashing in past us close by our left hand on the beach, and on our right hand through a wide opening between the

rocks over a sanded floor. Directly in front, the waves rose with high crests, combed over the black boulders, or ran to meet with heavy shock the broken ledge,—filling the air with spray. Lying there, we saw only the sea and the stars.

Spending the evening in this place, we went through with the full story, certain points of which had been given me in a breath in the morning. I give it only in a breath now ; for I have no heart to rehearse with any great fulness the sick bed scene, and the strange story of the strong man.

It seems that before the Englishman and his ward separated at Chicago, Cephas confessed to him, what I had more than once suspected, that this was the second time in which he had really lost his mental balance ; the first having been while he was wandering in the Sierra, leading the detective his wild chase. That he was not really himself, guided by sound discretion, for a time, during those weeks, seemed apparent to me then ; and his confession of it explained conduct, which would have been, otherwise, too erratic even for Cephas—the Wild Man.

The detective, in visiting the Englishwoman in Halifax, learned something more than he had known before of the relation which existed between Cephas and Helen,—a part of which is already known to the reader. In talking with the detective she prefaced her story with some account of Cephas' intimacy with her family, and then added :—

“Cephas seemed to us to be one of a new order of

men, new to us, so unselfish ; never appearing to think of himself. And he was so full of plans for doing good, that he thoroughly won my mother and myself to try to help him in what we supposed to be one grand purpose of his life.

“And,” said the woman with eye kindling, as she half rose from her reclining chair, “my mother in dying gave me charge, that, come what might, if my father’s property should ever be in my hands, it should go to carry out the peculiar plans of our young American friend, in establishing the educational projects he had in mind. And since my wishes for my own domestic life had been thwarted first by my father, and then by the hard hand of death, I began to live almost entirely for our new friend’s educational idea. Cephass’ love to me and mine to him was that of sister and brother ; and what he loved and lived for, became my own end in living. But my father’s mad pursuit of our friend ; then the conditions of his will ; then the chase set on foot by the executors,—made me despair of ever fulfilling my wish to endow a school upon the new plan. As soon as I was free, I sent you to find Cephass.

“My disease, however, has lately made such progress that I have hurried over sea, hoping to meet my friend and accomplish the great work of my life and his,—then die in gladness. The most triumphant hour of my life will be the one in which I set seal to papers, which give life to the great scheme over which I have dreamed and prayed by night and day for many years.”

“She had spoken,” said the detective, “with eyes

sparkling and face glowing; with an earnest enthusiasm, which seemed like the last energy of one about to die. The thought of self sacrifice in a great project for the good of others fully possessed her mind. Her whole manner bade me be quiet till she had finished her story. But the very first part of what she said, had almost overwhelmed me; and when she had concluded, I eagerly asked a few questions.

“My head snapped, like the crack of a pistol within my brain. The memory of all my early life returned in a moment. I knew the mother of the Wild Man was my mother. Cephas was the brother from whom I separated by the roadside, when as children we both started to run away. I could see the old log where we settled it. God alone knows what different tracks we have trodden.”

The detective arose, with intense excitement, nearly slipping from the rock into the eager waves.

He then proceeded to give me an account of his boy adventures after he had left his brother at the old log. His exposures in wild wandering with savage men in provincial forests, induced a sickness that almost deprived him of life. It destroyed all memory of his early days so that he had to begin over again, as a lad who knew nothing of himself save the wigwam where he was then lying, and the motherly squaw whose care had preserved his life. Many years afterwards, having been struck a severe blow upon the head in a contest with criminals, his memory so far came back to him that he could remember his mother's face, just as she

looked in kneeling when she prayed for him. But he remembered nothing more till,—in questioning Helen at Halifax,—the whole story came back to him, and his mental infirmity gave place to perfect soundness.

Then it was that I could understand all those strange moods in which I had seen this man.

And I began almost immediately to fancy that I had long seen resemblances between Cephias and his brother, and that I might have guessed the truth if I had been of nimble wit.

After giving the English Helen an account of his adventures with Cephias in the Rocky Mountains, the detective hastily returned to the States to meet his brother. But upon his arrival in Boston he learned that having failed to receive his message or having misunderstood it, Cephias had already come to New York, and sailed for England.

Next morning the boy Peter — then answering to the name Edward — who had been absent from my house the day before, met the Englishman at breakfast. When we were alone again I told my guest that the lad was one Cephias had given into my charge when we last met in Central, and that he had come to me from California when I moved to Cape Anne.

“I was astonished,” said I, “upon seeing him. His face was so familiar. I have tried to recall where I have seen his image. I must have dreamed about just such a face and figure.”

“Then I related the story of the finding of this waif

from the sea,—the wreck in Humboldt Bay. My companion staggered, and fell to the floor. The lad was his own son.

The detective's wife, who bore the image of the dead Helen, was at the time of the wreck sailing for Vancouver's Island with her brother and her little child. Her husband was expecting soon to follow, and make a home there. When the news of the disaster reached him, it was said that all had perished. The face of this boy was to his father like one risen from the dead.

Upon the day following, the detective sailed again for Halifax, taking the lad with him.

XXXI.

ALONE IN THE FOREST.

THE story of that day on the island, and the last part of the story that night by the sea, filled me with a sad surprise I cannot express. I never made any attempt to talk it over with any but One: Him I met in the lonely forest. As the cold days came on, and the ground was filling itself with frost so as to hold on upon the covering of snow soon to be laid over it, I went forth day after day. The woods in the low lands were floored with ice. And it was to me the poetry of motion to glide over a sea of glass through swamps and meadows commonly inaccessible; amid the alders and wet cedars, and fields of dead grasses whose spires rise above the ice waving in the wind. Lying down upon thin glass-like places, I looked as through windows into the still world under the ice; where the clear sunlight was streaming among reeds and stems, and warming minute creatures at their winter sports. My cares seemed to sink into the shallows below; the swift running water at the airholes carried my burdens down stream, fastening them under chains of ice; and the awkward cedars reached out their branches to tear away my trouble.

One still day late in the season I felt impelled to walk the woods all day, fifteen miles or more. The silence of the wilderness was unbroken all the morning. Half dreaming through the woodlands, and half filled with ecstatic joy in being alone in a wild life as if in some far country, I pushed on through the solemn depths of the forest to the most remote parts. I clambered over scattered mounds of old dead hemlocks buried by blankets of moss. I picked my way through tangled thickets of dead spruce limbs in frozen swamplands. I sauntered through groves of tall white pines; I trode upon the exposed fangs of enormous stumps, still remaining after the masts that once grew there had been long at sea.

At about noon, having been lying long upon a bed of ground-hemlock praying in the solitary place, I heard a sullen roar which filled the forest as some old gray tower fell heavily upon the earth. In the still air that precedes a storm, I soon saw another old trunk quiver, then reel and fall headlong,—the top boughs crashing against the sides of the neighboring stems; and the dull sound from the ground echoed through the aisles of the woods. Within an hour I heard the sweetest of forest sounds,—the rustling of dry leaves, the creaking of a lodged tree, the friction of dead branches, a distant moaning of winds. Best of all, I heard the low tones of the organ of the sea. The air was rising and stirring. Eddying and whirling went the half-decayed spoils of the maples; and slender trees began swaying to the breeze. As the hours went by, the voice of the

ocean became heavy and hoarse ; and loud surges were lashing the distant shore. It was full time for the bitter storms of winter ; the trees were close reefed, and all things were ready. Twisting winds began to bend and break the trees. The sound of the storm, pouring through rocky defiles and the open spaces of woodland and over the bending treetops, outroared the distant waves. The violence increased into the wild fury of a gale. And falling snow soon made a new solitude.

Entering my house sometime after dark, I found the detective returned once more from Halifax. Upon arriving there, he had met the doctor coming from the bedside of his dead patron. But she had placed on sure foundation by her will, the work over which she had been praying through so many years ; and concerning which my friend had prayed amid the wild places where I had walked that day ; and for which also I had been all that day praying. And,—how shall I say it?—the news had come that Cephas himself had perished at sea, washed from the deck in a storm, when trying to save a child from being swept off. So was he buried in the ocean, according to his own wish often expressed. Its grand waves, like watery mountains, are skipping like lambs over the place where his body lies ; and the deep is clapping its myriad hands over a new grave.

XXXII.

THE PROPHET'S MOUNTAIN.

AFTER the long storm with its dreary winds had passed by, and the thick damp fall had clothed the earth with still snow, we left the house for the Prophet's Mountain. The trees were clad with a golden fleece shining in the early sun. The drifts that had been borne about in the clouds were now deposited in many a quaint place; covering the earth with the drapery of the skies. Old walls and fences, well-curbs and high sweeps, and dilapidated barns were glorified. Nothing could be called common or unclean. The snow fall had been deep here, and there shallow, according to the will of a wild tempest. During the later hours of the night the storm had been followed by the reign of severe frost without a breath of wind. Bright sunbeams were now shining through the invigorating air, sparkling everywhere upon white fields and near or distant hills.

We were glad to see the beauty of the wilderness in winter. I have sometimes thought that those who live in the neighborhood of cities, who are always going "into town" when there are spare hours in the cold

season, err greatly in not getting so far back from crowds as to be obliged to penetrate the winter woods for recreation. Those who house themselves or track sidewalks during the most enchanting season of the year, have no idea of the glories that abide in forest walks within an hour's reach. The great white sheet let down from heaven in winter makes beautiful even the wide spread desolation of the wood chopper.

The margin of the stream which we crossed and traced that morning, was everywhere adorned with ornaments in white, curiously cut and carved in the pure snow and half formed ice. Entering the timber, where in the summer we had pine, spruce, hemlock, oak, maple, birch, young and old, shrub and mast, we saw now in the place of these a forest of snow. In this winter palace we found tall birch and slender maple, and the long limbs of hemlock and spruce, bending in snowy festoons, forming great and small archways; and the underbrush was transformed into numberless fairy grottoes for the rabbits and winter birds. We saw that many great branches and not a few trees had been cut clean off by the weighty axe of snow, wielded by the hand of the wind. So magnificent trunks lose half their arms or break down and die in great gales; or they snap under a heavy load of ice, swaying in a gentle breeze on a cool sunny morning. It is because their time is come: as it is appointed to men once to die, so it is appointed unto trees once to die; they grow on till the day of fate, then crack under the wind or crash under the heavy snow.

Through the strange architecture and wild ruins of the winter woods, we pushed on from Baker's mill to the ledge where the left hand way leads to the big boulders on Beaver Hill, and there turned to the right, just as a fox slowly moved on near our path. Following a buried road under its archways we came, near the Essex line, to the great pine which, before the September gale of '69, lifted its standard to the height of a hundred feet. It was three feet in diameter; but the fingers of the wind that night broke off forty feet of the top like a pipe stem, and hurled it point downward to the ground. Where the tip first struck thirty-three feet from the base of the tree, it snapped off close, then entered the ground again at a foot's distance, and there left a stub sticking four feet out of the ground; then the remainder of the top, thirty-three feet long, ended over, leaving the butt up the ravine. By the fall, several small beeches were split or bent over to form arches. This dismantled mast was the guide post near which we turned to the left, and followed up the bottom of a water trough a little way, and then swung to the right, and we were directly upon the heights of the Prophet's Mountain. Here the Millerite "Prophet America" undertook a forty days fast; and he became so thin before his friends found him, as to be almost ready to fly away lightly on the wings of the death angel.

This crest is one of the best spots in Eastern Massachusetts. Even the central domes of the Blue Hills of Milton give no finer forest views than this point.

Climbing a low pine which offered an easy chair, we looked northwest, far across the white woods to the spotless hills of Hamilton. East of north we could see the deep blue of the ocean by Ipswich beach; and upon the south the wide waters of Massachusetts Bay. Even at this distance, we heard the lonely surging of the sea; which sometimes continues for days after a long and hard gale.

The top rocks were bare, and the sun was warm in the middle of the day. We stayed till near sundown, talking mainly about the English Helen's will. This instrument plans to build, upon the Island Home in Nuntundale, a school for the better training of preachers; where from the very beginning to the end of their course they may, with a wide range of study and thorough discipline, be taught particularly to excel in writing and in speaking.

"Upon this very ledge," said I, "your brother was often lying prostrate, praying for length of days; that, among other things, he might push this business."

When we turned homeward, after passing the aged pine, we climbed a great boulder on our right rising about twenty feet high; and upon it as upon an altar we prayed together, and praised God for the memory of those who had passed away, and for their work. I took from my pocket a little book, containing the words and only the words of our Saviour,—the cover of the volume badly worn; and I gave it to the detective.

"This little book," said I, "Cephas carried in his pocket so many miles as would circle the globe. Your

brother's book belongs of right to you,—only believe the words of Christ as thoroughly as he did.

“Let me show you a text, and its marks. Here it is said, ‘Have faith in God. * * Whosoever * * shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, it shall be done, he shall have whatsoever he saith: and all things whatsoever ye shall ask for in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.’ This very rock is what your brother called his Rock of Praise, where he gave thanks to God for answering the prayers he had offered for establishing the new education. He had faith that the future would see these prayers answered. In this book is a dry beech leaf, torn from this overhanging tree, as a witness; and here, by this same text, is a pine needle from a memorable tree in Dana's woods; and here is a sprig of fir from a high ridge in the Rocky Mountains,—these are the witnesses laid in here to attest that he had faith in God. He believed; but died without the sight. We now know that he put an idea into the world which is to be endowed by millions of money. He died without the knowledge of this will, which makes certain the trial of the experiment. He died, subdued and tempered in mind, perhaps not so clear in his faith as he had been; he died without knowing the fact that God had answered him. But he lived, believing that God would do it.”

When it was nearly dark, we found ourselves at the Tilted Rock upon the top of Beaver Hill, where I had

first met my companion. Kindling a rousing fire in the huge oven-like opening, we stretched ourselves on spruce boughs, and then made an abundant supper. As the evening wore on, we used snow to bank up the sides of our shelter; and, moving our fire, we made a new one outside. Placing fir tips over the former bed of the fire, which was as hot as the bottom of a warming pan, we then put on our heavy overcoats and lay down to rest. My chum was soon sound asleep. I dozed awhile; then—made wakeful by many thoughts and cares concerning the business we had talked of all day—I arose, replenished the fire, and walked abroad.

There is no more weird walk in the world than through an evergreen forest, laden with new snow, upon a bright moonlight night. The snow itself dispelled the darkness; and the moon's light imparted a strange splendor to the rooms I passed through. I seemed to be living in another world from that in which we had moved about by day. The trees were still wreathed in snow, and the moon, a little past its full, shone through the archways: and I saw afar off gleams of light, as if the forest was interminable and everywhere clothed with ermine. Fresh fallen snow in the woods is pure beyond the thought of man. In the early morning, as soon as the sun shines upon it, the floor of the forest is brilliant and beautiful as the floor of heaven; and the changing of the sun gives a peculiar glory to each hour. But the forest must be penetrated in the night under a full moon to get the best effect: then the density of the white wood is

known for the first time; then the openings made by the choppers seem vast and infinitely wild. Shrubs and stumps and lone trees are clothed with celestial robes. And, in the night, the silence of the woodland is most suggestive of the presence of mysterious and infinite powers: in the day we are listening, but in the night we hope for no sound; though we are sometimes startled by the rising of the wind, or the fall of a tree or heavily laden bough.

Amid such scenery, my mind was bearing a heavy burden. I was almost borne down by the sense of sudden loss in the death of my friend; and I was glad to be alone in those very solitudes where he and I had walked and talked and prayed so often, that every rood was sacred ground. I was certain that my mind would best adjust itself to what seemed an overwhelming loss, by taking up again my friend's life work, and in his old haunts doing as he did, in giving hours by night and by day to the business of pleading with God: interceding for pagan populations, and for hard people at home; and, conscious of one's own weakness, praying for a ministry of still greater power to win men to Christ. And I remembered the solitary days and the night watches of our Saviour; and rather wondered that I had not oftener found hours after sunset, or lonely days, when I could entreat for the souls of my people and all earth's millions.

When it came to be about the noon of the night, I found a place under the lee of a large hemlock, where the snow carpet was at first thin, and had been dis-

solved by the rays of the sun at noon. The spot was quite dry. Spreading boughs upon it, I was here for a long time. When I returned to my rocky house and slept, I was still dreaming about the school that is to be, and sometime I would like to relate my dream.

As I awoke, I saw the rising sun putting rose tints on the snow. My comrade had clambered to the roof of our stone cottage. Climbing to his side, I found him reading the words of Jesus. And these were the words he read:—"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

"I believe," said the reader, "that this is the prayer of faith,—abiding in Christ and obeying His word. God loves to hear such a man pray."

And there upon the spot where we had first met, we renewed our consecration to God. So saw I two men praying where two had prayed before; only that now one was taken, and another kneeled in his place.

When we arose, gazing into each other's faces, it flashed upon me that this man, whom I thought I knew when I first met him on this rock, was he of whom I dreamed when I was a child. His face and figure was that of the South Sea missionary who perished in the cave, and who gave his son to my keeping. The contrast between the meek and innocent missionary of my child dreams and this man was so great, that I laughed aloud and told him the reason. His merriment joined mine.

"Well," said he, "we will make part of the dream good. I will ask you to continue to care for my boy. But you must certainly call him Peter. That is my true name, which my mother gave me. The name I am known by is one I picked up in England. My mother chose to name her sons Cephas and Peter — Rock and Rock. Here upon this rock, I ask you not to call my son by the name Cephas gave him — your name — Edward ; but call him Peter which is Cephas."

XXXIII.

CORONATION.

THE will of English Helen did not stand the test of English law; and Cephas' dream of a new college is just as much a dream as ever. I have already burned a peck of the old odds and ends, which I found in his educational pigeon holes; and whether I can make anything out of the half peck remaining is not yet tested. He left no clear and connected statement of his views and arguments; and I doubt whether I can so put together his notions on the subject as to persuade all mankind to adopt them. What then was the use of all his life struggling? Did he chase a phantom in vain? Not in vain. He was the more careful to educate himself; and he had the wider sympathies and broader views; and he drew near to God in prayer: and in it all, he sought to have no will of his own; he aimed to honor his Master, and undertook it for Him; and he left it all with Him to do, or defer, or never to do, according to Infinite Wisdom.

In his parochial work, Cephas was from first to last an obscure man, never rising to note; doing his work

well, but certainly no better than thousands of pastors, whose fame reaches little beyond their own parishes. What good then did it do,—all the hours of hard praying in forest and mountain dell or by the curling sea? Were his mighty aspirations and unutterable longings for the widest usefulness wasted, like the sweet sound of gurgling waters in a fir forest among rocky heights unapproached by man? Did not He whose ear is open to the cry of the jungle fowl in their native thickets, or the sea birds in the desolate north, or the scream of the mountain eagle, hear the voice of a man who prayed in strong agony in lonely places for the coming of the divine kingdom?

Cephas certainly made some very grave mistakes in his parochial work. He erred in judgment. To lead him to correct those errors was God's way of answering his prayers ; since one's fitness to serve must be found in the make up of his own character. His intent God accepted. A good aim well kept to, is a good deed. To live with a high ideal is a successful life. It is not what one does, but what he tries to do, that makes the soul strong and fit for a noble career. All that was left of days and nights of agonizing cries to God, and careful planning of great achievements for the divine kingdom, was simply — the strength of having tried to do great things ; perhaps no great strength at that, but surely far more than if he had slept and idled all his years.

It is not a bad discipline for one to see all early dreams dispelled and all plans broken, and still to recognize the hand of a loving Father and Friend.

“Though we die from off the earth,” said Cephas in one of his papers, “as obscurely as shell fish on the shore, yet His kingdom shall increase, and His name grow great, and His praises fill the earth. All life is a discipline ; and if we are brought to take God’s will as our own, we gain the highest success that is possible to man. God has disappointed a great many persons in their life plans, but the world still rolls on. God will not hurry forward the millennium on our account. He has allowed many better men than we to die without seeing it, though they much desired it. We had pet plans and built them up through years : if at last they fall to the ground, have we not the heart to say, ‘Thy will be done?’

The discipline of life is not so much to achieve for others, as through toil for others, to perfect the individual workman. I am invited and commanded to labor for the Lord that I may do a little, but mainly that it may be tested what manner of spirit I am of. I had great plans, but most likely they were not wise, since God has crushed them. If I cherish a good purpose and a submissive will, what need I more? If I am not submissive my plans were secretly selfish. Yesterday, there failed one of my projects which I called great, but it was a very petty affair after all ; it is pitiable, contemptible, if I am depressed by such failure : for if I cannot endure that God’s will shall be done now, I shall be always making objections to having the divine will done in heaven—if I plant foot there. Phantom foundations, fall then : and I will be

no more disturbed than an angel is agitated by earthly changes."

But he who wrote these words was broken down and made mad, in part by the failure of his earthly plans,—through ill health and strange sorrow, but his broken purposes the severest grief of all. He wrote better than he lived. When, however, I lie down in my camp,

"Where a wild stream with headlong shock
Comes brawling down a bed of rock
To mingle with the main,"

I sometimes wonder a little, what the Lord meant by destroying all of Cephas' high endeavors in his life, and then casting him into the sea. Was he not capable of doing some worthy work in this world? So wondering, I rise and follow up this wild stream: now half concealed by the tangled undergrowth, now forming pools under great rocks or falling over prostrate tree trunks, curling here about old roots, and there dammed up by the beavers a hundred years ago, again rushing wildly under high branch of aged beech or giant white pine, moving again through meadows,—in its course falling from a considerable height in the rocky hills to the sea, yet moving no mill wheel. I cannot say that this brook leads a vain life. And I must believe that all the quiet energy or hot haste of Cephas from early childhood to middle manhood was not in vain. Little did he accomplish; perhaps as much as many, but nothing when compared with his high purposes: still, the Lord of the water course must have delighted in his

wild and energetic career, even though he apparently did little but run in the woods, and gained no more fame than a nameless brook.

As I sit here in my camp,—watching ceaseless changes upon the face of the mobile sea, with snowy breakers playing at my feet in hot July,—I am decidedly disconcerted by the legacy my friend left me—the charge to overhaul his pigeon-holes. I do not want to burn their contents in a lump. Cephas said that at least one third of the notes he would throw away,—and I will; and another third would be of some use to him,—but he cannot use them now and I will not; while the best third might be of some service to another,—and these I will use and work up for him as best I can.

For the past fortnight, I have every evening illuminated the forest, and made the dark rough waters under the bank sparkle, by setting fire to no inconsiderable quantities of trash in the way of pencil notes,—which served their use when they marked Cephas' mental growth; but it is to me very doubtful whether the rest of his notes will set the world in a blaze, even if I publish them. No man is a hero to his valet; and I fear I do not well enough appreciate my most intimate friend's literary work. Perhaps I know his defects too well. I am constrained to say that Cephas was not a great original thinker. He had, however, at times, a quaint and decidedly ingenious way of putting things. He was, also, a diligent and most thoughtful reader; and he read his own mental experiences more than any printed book, save the Bible. What writing Cephas

did, was often in a style singularly fresh, vigorous, and likely to gain readers ; but, as often, page after page of common place. That is to say, his writing was immature. He had not learned to discriminate, and reject worthless matter. Reading his sermons or essays is like traveling through a country with quaint houses and people, good crops, picturesque scenery—some marvelously beautiful, with occasional glimpses of the grand and majestic: but also many roods of monotonous and uninteresting country,—pine plain; patches of sand, and strips of bog.

Cephas' writing was so insignificant, compared with results he hoped to reach, that I ask what came of all his labors, and all his prayers? In overhauling his notes, I find none so instructive as those which relate to his strange struggling—not with his fate as a man of smaller intellectual caliber than he was willing to put up with—but his singular pleading with the Source of all Illumination; asking that the utmost possible might be made out of him as he was. I do not think he ever expected the Lord to make a great man of him; he was conscious of his limitations: but he did expect the Lord to make all he could out of the original material. And Cephas wrestled with the Lord day and night to do this for him.

But even this failed, as I think, to give my friend any pre-eminent professional success. Who outside his own circle ever heard of him? All his plans for intellectual improvement,—extensive enough and wise enough; all his diligence,—which could not be sur-

passed ; and all his prayings, unceasing, fervent and full of faith,—sufficed to raise him only to the ordinary level. He was far more of a man than would have been possible under a less energetic course of self discipline and high aiming and pleadings for help from heaven. There was about him a certain personal magnetism, which made me cling to him. I am confident that he was much greater than his work ; his manhood was in advance of his sermons. His soul culture is so manifest in his writings that they appear, to a friend, to have much in them, though crude. If Cephas had lived twenty years longer to pursue the plan he began upon, I have no doubt he would have left two or three very manly and readable volumes. But he perished in the sea with his work half done.

Was his student life, therefore, a failure because he was cut off in the midst of his days? Did all his high purposes enter into the make-up of his soul ; adding to his dignity, and somewhat to his power,—as he entered upon a new career in the unseen world? Was it enough that he did what he could? I came today upon this pencil note: in which Cephas placed, at the top, Baxter's lines,—

“If death shall bruise this springing seed,
Before it come to fruit,
The will with Thee goes for the deed,
Thy life was in the root.”

There is added this comment,—“It is not true that careful studies will always make a man famous; or

that one's true mental power will be always fully developed, or even indicated—much less appreciated—in this world: and the man, who builds up for himself an ideal future for this life,—based upon an ill-grounded expectation of intellectual power over men,—may prepare himself to be disappointed. It is, nevertheless, true that careful studies will certainly give some degree of mental power; and that whatever vigor one gains in this life will give success in a future sphere. He therefore builds too low who builds beneath the skies."

When Cephas' health was breaking up he wrote,—upon his boxes of papers,—“This, or heaven.”

Upon that morning in Central, when we separated for the last time, as we were going out of my door, he said,—

“The mind is ever making new plans; and if all fail, our faith bids us make more definite plans for another life,—that in all the failures the soul may not lose heaven. The soul is led by strange sorrows and unutterable disappointment to turn away from the earth, and look for a home on high.”

My eyes were at the moment held; and I did not see that it was the beginning of the end,—the setting of his steps for the last journey. Knowing what course of study he intended to pursue, I look upon his life as that of an explorer entering a continent new to him, making plans for travel, adventures, great gain in knowledge, rich experience and material wealth,—then suddenly summoned to enter the heavenly country; disappointed in the one plan, turning quickly to the

other,—as the needle turns when crossing the magnetic meridian, hesitating, oscillating for a moment, then swinging into the new direction, and holding the course steadfastly as the polar star. I have in hand the fragment of a letter which Cephias wrote me on shipboard, upon the morning of the great catastrophe, in the very hour of it.

“DEAR EDWARD,—

“After my late experience, I feel more than ever the utter vanity of everything but a noble life: I would give up the dreams of years if I could only gain that. Plans for earthly fame may well fade from a mind bent only on living unselfishly. Personal holiness of the highest worth; if this is gained, let all else go down.

“I have just been reading the Peninsular Campaigns. Wellington declared that his final success depended on his having no fixed plan, except to succeed; he was able to modify his campaign according to circumstances: while the French had a set plan, to which they must adhere in all events; and when things went very wrong, they had to begin all over again, changing the whole. Sometimes I think I have made my pet methods of glorifying God my object in living; while in fact if I in any way fulfil the great design of life, which is to glorify God, it is of no consequence whether or not I carry out one of my plans.

“It was said that Arnold of Rugby awoke every morning with the impression that every thing was an open question. And while I admire the persistency

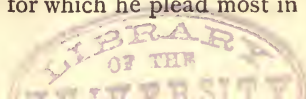
with which I have followed my life aims, I am ashamed that I have not been more ready to honor God in His way, rather than mine; and to accept heartily each new revelation of his plans. I ought, every morning, to have looked on all plans as open, and liable to be changed any moment by my wise and loving Father.

“To learn perfect submission,—to fulfil the desire of that devout man who prayed that he might become to God what a man’s hand is to a man,—is more needful than that I sweat and toil and importune the Lord on the subject of those miserable rags, remnants, tags and tatters, that are jammed into those pigeon holes which I gave into your charge, telling you, forsooth, to print some part. I hereby revoke —”

—In that moment was heard the ringing cry,—
“Save my child!” “Save my child!”

Sitting in the door of a stateroom opening on deck, Cephas dropped paper and pencil,—and never took them up again.

My friend’s chase for the “Phantom of Tragabigzanda,” and “The North Star,” and the pursuit of the plan indicated in “The Old Red Trunk,” failed utterly, so far as relates to the grand results aimed for. And of the peculiar ideas around which his life crystalized, “The Shagbark” habit which he followed more heartily and persistently than any thing else, seems the only one which was pre-eminently successful. And this was a miserable failure, so far as now appears, in respect to those particular projects for which he plead most in



the wilderness. Wherein, then, were his prayers availing? Parochial work and Sunday service were apparently favored with fair but not what is commonly called extraordinary success. As to his prayers for the wide world's population; and all his crying unto God for the coming of the divine kingdom, the words of Sir Thomas Browne might have been often in his mouth,—

“If God hath vouchsafed an ear to my supplications, there are surely many happy that never saw me, and enjoy blessing of mine unknown devotions.”

It is very certain that Cephas never impugned the divine promises to answer prayer; but felt to the end fully satisfied that God heard him, and gave him what he most needed,—an answer in substance if not in form: and if he was satisfied, no one else can find fault. The answer, which he believed himself to have received, and the only one that I know of his receiving, was the personal discipline, which came of all his high aiming and walk with God. Was this enough?

I am sometimes struck with a sense of the ludicrous, when I think of the eccentric wanderings into which Cephas' wild Shagbark led him. I ask,—What is the use? Why did he not, if he wanted anything of God, stay at home and obtain it like a Christian man upon his knees in his study? Instead of this, likely enough, I read a rough pencil note, which indicates that he went out upon a starlight night and climbed the back of an abrupt hill, rugged with rocks, uprooted trees and timber fallen criss-cross; the hill being surrounded by deep ravines and encircled with dark mountains.

Here, perhaps, he ascended a towering rock to watch the meteors as they streamed through the heavens, and to pray for his studies, his people, distant friends, far countries and for the coming generations of men. Then descending to cross a ravine—on his way to the place commonly called home—he had to feel his way very carefully with shagbark stick to find firm foothold; passing thus several hundred feet at a very sharp angle over the debris of fallen ledges, by a path ill defined and torn by frequent heavy showers, where one misstep might have been well nigh fatal.

I ask,—What is the use? I am more impressed by the strangeness of his conduct, than by his devotion. I less admire his intercession than wonder that this Wild Man did not break his neck. To him, it was an hour in the secret place of the Almighty; but I do not recommend others to try it. And now that the sea has swallowed him up, I inquire of myself,—What came of all his strivings in the hours of solitude? No marvellous result appeared in his outer life. His life broke like a bubble on the sea. Was his the prayer of faith, to be answered in some future time unknown? Was it answer enough, that his soul grew nobler day by day? Was his voice no more than the wild cry of a buffeted sea bird? Were his hours of agony or ecstatic joy merely a beautiful display of the devotional spirit, like the white flowers of the sea that spring and blossom upon the crest of rising waves then fall and fade upon the beach?

“Perhaps,” said Cephas one day, “God will not give

us the trivial things we pray for, but that which is far better,—patience, the development of faculties, and eternity for the use of powers well schooled on the earth.”

Who shall say that his prayers failed, because they did not exalt him to a life of fame? Did he not gain the highest life possible to him? Did he not feel as well satisfied in his course, as any men around him about the success of their common employments?

“Miners,” said Cephas, amid California gold diggers, “go to the top of all these high hills, and prospect everywhere. I go to the hill’s to find deep closets for communing with God. These prospect holes afford concealment when I ply the pages of my Testament. The miners often dig a little and quit, finding nothing to repay them. I get unrecorded wealth, infinite store of wisdom, better to me than choicest ore. Here is an old lode, deep cut, long worked and bereft of its treasures; I find it still rich in the kind of wealth most prized in the heavenly country where I shall soon travel.”

It shall make no difference to you, reader, whether or not the wisdom he found there be ever printed for you in vellum and gold, so long as he himself felt satisfied with it.

“It is true,” adds Cephas, “that I do not exhibit all this wonderful wealth to my neighbors; but I pore over it in secret places, as a miser over his coins. If I have said or written any thing useful, I dug the wisdom out of hill tops, in the stillness of mountain valleys, in deep

ravines along water courses, in dark forests, among sands of the seaside, or from crags on the coast. The metal bearing mountains — treasure houses of gold and silver among the clouds — and the shores of two seas have been sources of boundless wealth to me ; since everywhere I have found God present ready to illuminate my darkness, and to give me spiritual gems better than the traffic of commerce and the jewels of eastern kings. Glittering stones and shining gold are nothing to me, if I go abroad and talk with Heaven's King. Our mountain birds are rare, but when upon the banks of our wild rivers I open the Word, the Dove of God appears as in old times ; and I seem to see the Son of Man, and to hear the voice from Heaven."

I am led to feel that somehow such experiences brought a rich reward to the character of him who had them. I cannot ask whether or not this prayer or that was answered, for I am persuaded that to his mind all things were answered ; he was satisfied in the shining of the Light of life. Perhaps in his seeking for constant communion with God such as the angels have, and always aiming for that, he was content with the fame he might look for in heaven.

"Here," says Cephas in one of the notes I came upon a few days ago, "is a South African missionary, who has a reputation among his savage parishioners for skill in making three legged stools ; and they know nothing of the fame for scholarship which he has in his own country. So, if we have much secret converse with God, our reputation on the earth will be always

less than what we have in heaven our own country. Our best qualities are better known there than here."

I must ask pardon of my readers, for the obtrusion upon their notice of this Shagbark habit in such manner and to such extent in this account of Cephas' life. I have no reason to suppose that the notes on this topic which I have found among his papers were ever designed to see the light, certainly not in the form I have used them. He made notes on his experiences just as he made notes on books ; he used them in sermon writing, and would have done so still further if he had been spared to write up his papers. But there was nothing egotistical or morbidly self conscious in his mind, in so writing. I must take to myself the blame, if I have made him appear at disadvantage. And I must also warn the reader that, in looking over what I have written, I find I have idealised this part of his life too much.

Certainly, there was not, in this respect, any peculiar sanctity about my friend's life ; or if there was, he wist not that his face shone. It may be that what I have written, founded upon the facts in Cephas' life, has been too strongly put. I ought to say frankly, that he was too much alone for his health ; his nerves were not always able to bear the weight of care and joy and intensity of experience, which characterized these lonely hours. He came to be fully conscious of this ; and to some extent modified his course,—turning his loved hours of communion into blissful moments for a time ; although, to the end, he appears to have found the God

of his solitude to be the source of rest and his Physician,—as well as One to whom he applied for the arousing of all his faculties, and for the moulding of men around him.

I know, however, that, in spite of all drawbacks, the gladdest hours of earth to him were found in his long walks. And,—shall I confess it,—I sometimes wish I could have such joy and ecstasy in devotion as he had, month after month and year after year. Although I can myself never be turned from my habit of trying to see the Saviour face to face in my own study at accustomed hours and whenever I look up, yet I believe that if one's study is out of doors the vision of the Master may become more vivid; so that I often imagine myself sitting or walking with my books in the woods, and in mental pictures I pray unto God in the wilderness. My own personal habits I find it difficult to change, and each month I am more wedded to my study table and to indoor experiences. Since Cephas' death, I have had no heart to walk the woods as I used to do.

I have thought, nevertheless, that some younger man may be led to do what I cannot do. If I have felt more interest in this part of my story of Cephas' career than any other, it is because I desire more than anything else to impart to some one by this account, an irrepressible purpose to walk with God out of doors, some hours every day; if not for the power of intercession or the growth of the soul, then for the unutterable joy of it, as if hours of heaven could be found in

common forest paths or on familiar shores. Homely pastures, tame hills, tangled with scrubby growth, or monotonous plains, may thus rise to more dignity than the Elysian fields. New life will kindle and glow in the heart of every one who will take some hours daily for talking over all hopes and fears and aspirations and perplexities, with the Son of Man.

In view of the strange ending of Cephas' life, cutting off his life when hardly begun, I cannot help feeling that perhaps after all his life was a success, inasmuch as he learned to walk with God ; albeit his plans all failed, and he and his attempted work have perished from off the earth, leaving little more mark than one of the waves that washed Salisbury beach last flood tide. I look gladly on this Shagbark stick at my side, and think what it meant to him. And this is to me his most precious monument. Some days I bear it to the sea ; and look out on the waste of waters which wash and roar over his grave. And I think of the dense showers of tiny shells constantly falling upon the sea's bottom, which have ere this covered his frame : or, if I may dare to dream of what he himself once suggested, I imagine that new vitality has been given to his cold clay, since it has become incorporated in the swift bodies of the inhabitants of the waters. I am sure I care not, as he cared not, for the body. I look upon this stout staff in my hand as the instrument his soul used in compelling success to crown his years. A record of efficient work in training men and moulding society, and the record of thoughts

which may instruct after ages, do not make up a successful life if the soul be self satisfied, self seeking, and self inspired. If I could carry this Shagbark, all other sceptres might be taken away ; for I believe that by this I could win the highest success of which I am capable. Is it not true, that to take the Word of God, and to learn from it how to prevail in prayer and especially in intercession, is the great secret of all moral power ?

The true CORONATION of life is found in our personal discipline, never in merely doing this or that. The story of Cephas is that of an obscure man, with high aims and apparently wise means of gaining them ; he failed largely through his own fault, yet he won life's battle. The ultimate use of all our life plans is that they are the scaffolding by which to build up the soul into the likeness of the Perfect Man. Self sacrifice for others, prayer to God, submission to the divine will,—are not the end of life ; these are the instruments which God bids men use, as if they were all and in all : but the CORONATION is found in the perfected soul itself, a spirit made fit for bearing a kingly part among principalities and powers. The true power of him who is thus perfected consists in the indwelling of those principles of life which characterized the Son of Man ; so that in some true sense Christ is the CORONATION of every perfected life.

“Give me in a few lines directions how to live,” asked the English detective of Cephas in the last conversation they ever had.

These were the words written in answer,—“To gain good sense and perfect faith is enough. To know how to manage one’s affairs with good judgment and to lead a well proportioned life, is to fulfil well the earthly mission. There are men enough who know how to manage money, who are fools in their neglect of spiritual interests. To make wise plans for worthy work is the best thing for a manly man to aim for: if this is done, the life is successful whether or not the plans are fulfilled.

“You have noticed that young men with little experience in life, are more conscious of their own powers than acquainted with the powers of other men and the conditions of work in this world. Their energy is, therefore, better developed than their judgment; so that it is not uncommon to find them pushing with an amazing force for heights they will never attain. But if they form hard habits of toil, and live by faith as well as works, they are likely to obtain that personal discipline which is true success in life. He who gives himself wholly to the work of gaining those elements of character which truly represent the divine life, is in the right line of living. This does not require much capital; and one place is as good as another to do this business in.”

I have lately visited the old home scenes, where Cephas and I were boys together. The pines are growing thick in the pastures where we once played. The lower limbs are dying and dropping as the trees

grow higher ; so die the ideas and habits of childhood as we rise year by year to higher manhood. The new growths of pine in their turn, drop off as the topmost boughs seek the free air and the sunlight ; so we mourn not the fall of aspirations and projects once the means of our growth, which we now drop off like the under branches of thick growing pines. Our life plans aid our growth this year and the year following ; but as we get our heads into a better atmosphere, we forget the dead branches below. As I think of the boyhood days, it seems like a dream that such a lad or young man ever lived : and I say to myself,—There never was such a man as Cephas ; and no one ever lived such a life as I have fondly seen in vision when I have thought of him. But if it be so, it is a profitable dream to have ; and I will stand to it as true.

Very often, when I am walking alone, or sitting in my house, I have a panorama of surprising beauty suddenly pass before my eyes ; a vision of snow-clad mountains rising high in the sunlight, with forest clad ravines and white streams dashing down their rocky channels. They can never fade from my mind ; and often they appear to me unlooked for, like sights of some celestial country in which I once dwelt many days. Range on range they rise, like a wall against the sky. I ride along their base. I am hidden within their ravines. I ascend one of the outskirting hills. I behold the giant peaks near at hand. Or if I scale the high wall of the Great Range itself, I find myself riding upon the topmost wave of a sea of mountains. I am

glad that I once went through just such experiences, and that I can often recall those wonderful sights in these days when I live in a common country. So comes to my mind, again and again, the memory of him who was often my companion amid the grandest scenes in nature ; with whom I walked day after day in the mountains, as if we could measure

“The stony girdle of the world.”

One picture I shall never forget. The white pyramids of the Snowy Range in winter were not unfrequently seen in brilliant sunlight, when all the rest of the landscape was darkened with clouds. My memory of Cephas stands in my mind in perpetual sunshine ; and I gaze upon it when clouds and darkness overspread everything else. He who was my good genius while he lived, still stands upon the earth ; and day by day I find myself looking that way, as if he were part of the natural scenery of this globe. As I think of him today, I remember a rainbow I once saw in the mountains. One foot rose from a deep ravine, the other resting high on a mountain side ; and the sunlight was shining upon a mountain top under the height of the arch ; every where else there was darkness and dense rain pouring. Deep clouds and the rain are now around me ; but upon my friend the sunlight is shining today, and over him bends the arch of glory.

XXXIV.

THE BOY PETER.

I AM living today in a dream. I have received a water-soaked diary from the South Seas. Peter Spriggs went to Australia, and engaged in active mission work in the colony. And he perished by wreck in a cave, just as I dreamed when a child. An account of this wreck appeared in our commercial papers and in one of our monthlies, though I still cling to the imagery of my dream as the more authentic account.

But this boy Peter is no dream. He is at this moment playing with my boat at the foot of the garden. The son of the missionary hopes to become a missionary, and voyage for distant countries. He is fascinated with everything pertaining to the sea. Quite aside from Cephas and his brother, I take to this boy, since he is just like me in this.

The endless murmur of the waters never died out of my memory, after I first heard it upon the sands of Ipswich beach. To listen at night to the sound of the surge afar off, to walk all day on the wave-washed shore amid the crash of billows, made a visit to the seaside

an era in my childhood. And when as a man, I had a home on the brink of the ocean, and first saw the waves in a storm bursting upon the coast with terrific power ; and looked upon the shattered ledges, where the waves had been blasting and hewing and chipping the hard rocks by day and by night for unnumbered centuries ; or when I went inland, and heard the chambers of the woods resound with the regular fall of the waves on the unseen beach,—it was only a little while before I found myself everywhere searching for the sea. No prospect from hills a little inland was perfect without the sight or the sound of the ocean. I came to be oppressed with the silence of country towns ; they seemed to keep perpetual Sabbath. At home I was on the world's highway ; and though there was no continual clatter of countless carts, there was the unceasing plash of unnumbered waves. The mirthful ripple or the angry roar was always ringing in my ears ; and the din of the Atlantic mingled day and night with the voices of the children, and was heard at the table, or in watches by the sick bed. I came to feel that the sea was part of my household : and when I journeyed back from the coast I was like an outcast having no home, wherever I might lodge or wander.

This boy Peter, with name like a rock, would love to stand all day upon a rock in the edge of the sea to help do battle with the waves. He came to me this morning, to read with sparkling eyes from his book :—
“The sea gods, it is said, quit during the hours of darkness their palaces under the deep ; they seat them-

selves on promontories, and their eyes wander over the expanse of the waves." By the hour together, he delights to watch from some height the greedy waters encroach upon the marshes, till

"The low green prairies of the sea"

are covered by the advancing tide. And he is always finding some new phrase from his Homer to picture the sea. Yesterday, it was

"The silver ensigns of his waves,—"

making Xanthus represent the white caps, when the wind stirs up the sea. When he sees schools of fish ruffling the water along shore; or looks upon a gull floating far above us, then descending to rest with

"His heart upon the heart of ocean,
* * learning all its mystic motion,
And throbbing to the throbbing sea,"—

he feels that he himself must leap into the tide, and struggle with the blinding billows on the beach; or he will dive from our boat—when sledge-like blows of heavy waves are striking against us—and buffet with the briny crests, "ever climbing up the climbing wave."

Not yet does he know the dark tragedies of the sea, not yet has he read the record of his own drawing forth from the waters. The sea is a robber and full of

graves. English Helen's death was hastened by long pounding on the bar in a storm at the mouth of an English harbor. Cephas, and his brother, and the brother's wife so like the first Helen, were the victims of the sea. The grave of Helen on the Island Home has been almost swept into the ocean. The mighty waves have, in these last years, broken through a thin barrier of rock and found an approach to the cliff where her body lies, and have torn out the soil; and now "the foaming tusks of the sea" are goring the rocks at the base of the crag.

So find I the sea mingling with my affairs, as if it were one of the characters of this story; an instrument in moulding the spiritual nature of men and shaping their destiny: rather, these incidents, which are so much to me, form a minute part of the grand story of the sea. With the domestic affairs of how many households has the sea mingled age after age: the fate of nations has been like a drop in a bucket, when the surging deep has lifted up its voice to utter the mandate of God; armies and navies have been tossed about like toys, by no will of their own. So stand we in relation to the eternal ages and God's great plan of governing the universe; the sea is a symbol of the Infinite Power in His relation to us, loving, consoling, bereaving,—and opening to us the hopes of future ages and a career worthy the human soul. This sea itself is nothing, we make paper boats; but we are preparing for the grander scenes.

Looking from my window, I see a long absent ship

coming into the home harbor ; she has rounded to, the sails are shivering ; how soon will all disembark,—and how soon will all sail in unseen ships for a new country. To voyage for the unknown regions, to participate in a life concerning which we know in part, to learn more of the Infinite Friend under His own guiding,—this is the unspeakable boon of life, to enter into life everlasting ; where all earthly friendships which have been worthy that name will find new felicity, without disease or death or sin.







14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED
LOAN DEPT.

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or
on the date to which renewed.

Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

23 Feb '60 J H

REC'D LD

FEB 26 1960

59482

956

T298

